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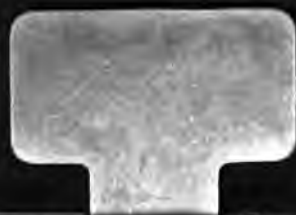
JONAS FISHER

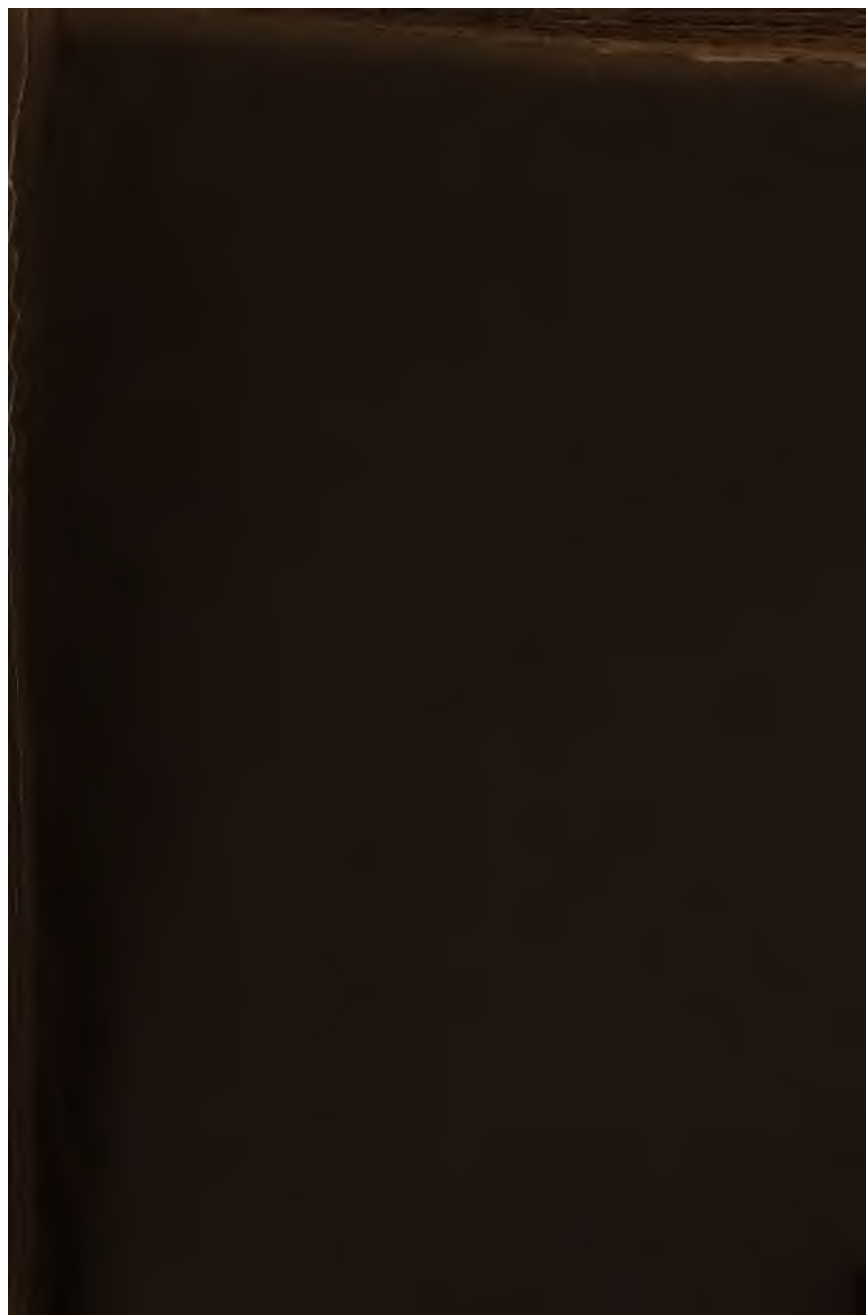


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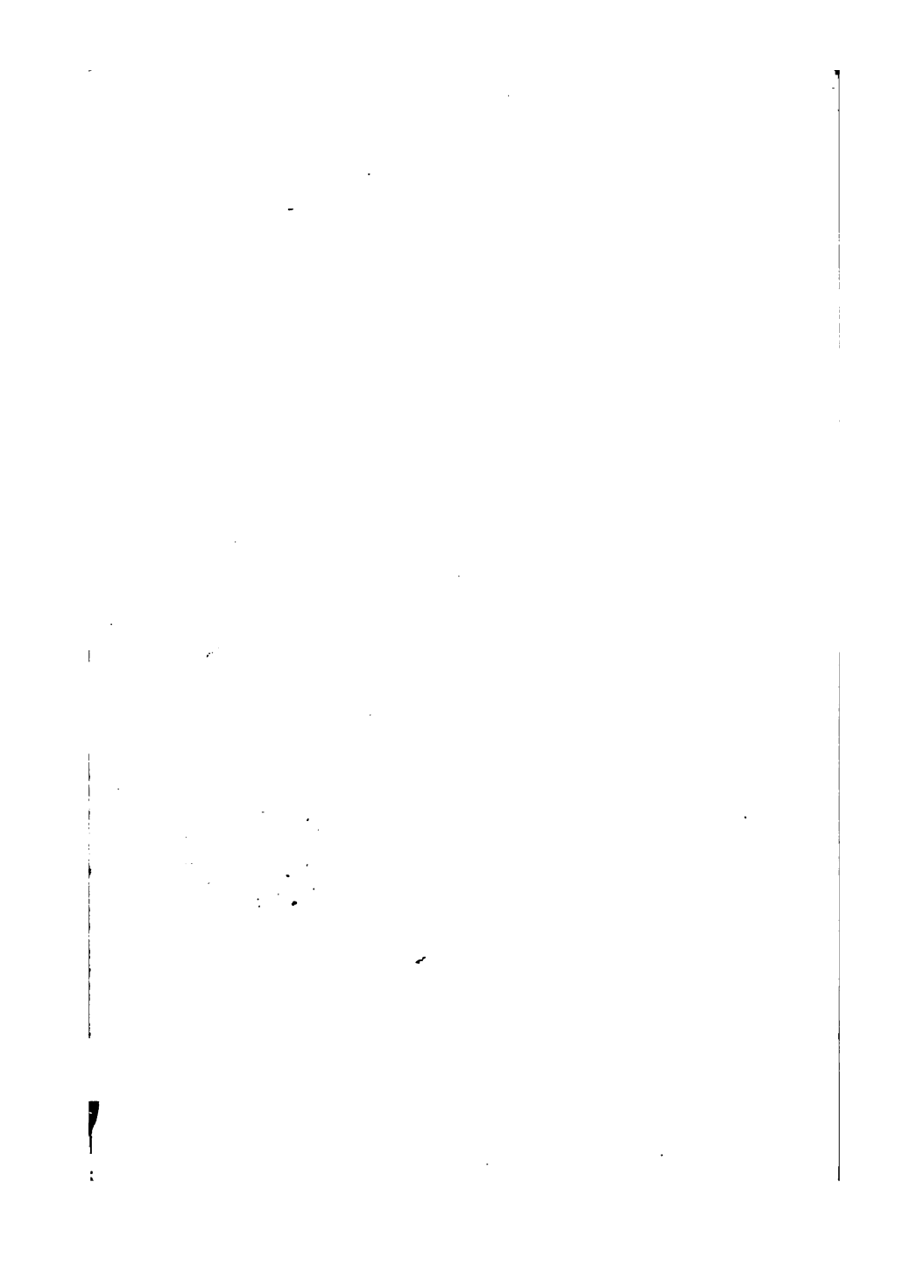








JONAS FISHER.



JONAS FISHER:

A POEM IN BROWN
AND WHITE.

BY

THE EARL OF SOUTHESK, K.T.

SECOND EDITION.



LONDON:

TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

1876.

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280 . 0 . 42

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237.

for girls,
not harm.
in its blood,
; should alarm

sex,
de a spade,
etter far
rrayed.

I do not call a spade, nor use,
 Nor even call a trowel trowel ; the best vowel ;

SECTION.

ERRATA.

- Page 3. Int., ver. 13 . . After *eyes* insert full stop ;
 „ 10. Part 1, ver. 20 . For „ *Colours* read „ *Colours* .
 „ 64. „ 2, „ 124 . After „ *the* insert „ *the* full-stop to comma.
 „ 157. „ 3, „ 304 . After *have* insert comma.
 „ 219. „ 4, „ 78 . For *stains* read *streams*.
 „ 237. „ 5, „ 190 . After *head* insert comma.

Instead of . . .
 I do not call a spade a spade
 Nor even call a trowel trowel ;

4.

Nay, honestly, I may declare
I scarcely call a hoe a hoe,
Though some dog-roses in my beds
Would startle at a flower-show.

5.

Reader, you might as well expect
From apple-trees to gather figs,
As look for townish airs from me,
Brought up among the cows and pigs.

6.

Though no ass, neither—I have got
Some things worth knowing in my mind,
As, if you'll kindly read this book,
I'm pretty certain you will find.

7.

And even though the superfine
My humble talk should not admire,
They well may value every word
Dropped by Augustus Grace, Esquire—

8.

The kindest and the best of men—
That's *my* opinion, people prone
To rail at the unorthodox,
Of course are welcome to their own.

9.

Then readers all can *skip* ; though here
I place a thought for such gay trippers :
Said Mr. Grace, " Life's ' Ship of Fools',
Though captainless, is manned by *skippers*."

10.

But as tastes differ, I'll just say—
" Impatient reader ! freely take
Inverted commas, through this book,
For rattles of the rattle-snake,

11.

" And skip as nimbly as you'd do
If that same serpent tried a spring ;
Among the incidents you'll come
On matter much more interesting."

12.

And reader ! ere I make my start,
Another and another word—
Those incidents are strictly true,
I tell what I have seen and heard

13.

When visiting among the poor ;
Although I hide what 's right to hide—
Few people like to find their homes
Shop-windowed, talked about, and eyed

14.

Disguise is simple ; an event
Among the poor repeats itself
Exactly—like a standard book
That stares at one from every shelf.

15.

This last 's a double-barrelled speech—
Pray listen to the second shot—
I told a friend, the other day,
Of certain stories in my lot ;

16.

And when I came to the Dead Babe,
And how its mother looked—" Indeed,"
Said he, " your story 's word for word
From 'Lambert's' tale by Mr. Reade."

17.

" Well, Sir," I said (and say the same
To any man, whoe'er he be),
" I've borrowed nought from Mr. Reade,
And he has borrowed nought from me.

18.

" If any form of oath or vow
May not be thought to smack of wrong,
Pray find me one to swear by now—
And oh ! be sure you choose it strong—

19.

"To swear to you, and every one,
As certainly as here I stand,
That all my stories (save the last)
Are genuine new, not second-hand.

20.

"And as for that last incident—
The Starving Family, I mean—
I heard it from the very lips
Of him who 'd looked upon the scene."

21.

So much for that! I don't profess
To say as much about the talk;
However good one's memory is,
Old conversation's apt to balk.

22.

I merely try to give the sense ;
But this I think might quite be shown—
I've set down Mr. Grace's words
As well as if they were my own.

23.

Long prefaces are prigs who hang
Text-cards upon a garden wall
Meant to grow plums and apricots :
So now to business. Readers all,

24.

For your success and happiness
I am a most sincere well-wisher,
Pray be a little so for me !—
Yours ever truly, Jonas Fisher.

JONAS FISHER.

PART I.

I.

A YOUNG man I : I used to live
Deep sunk in filthy sloughs of sin ;
But illness came, I thought to die,
I searched my heart all round within.

2.

And then it seemed to me that this
Brute-mannish life that I had led,
Was not the life that brought much joy
To men alive, or men when dead.

3.

I prayed for health ; my life to change
I vowed, if but my prayer were heard.
Recovered soon, with grateful heart,
Through help Divine I kept my word.

4.

In former days at eight o'clock,
The shutters closed, the goods put by,
The shop made fast with bar and bolt,
Along the pavement I would hie ;

5.

And at a favourite place of call
Some godless lads I used to meet,
From different shops across the way ;
And then we swaggered down the street.

6.

All arm in arm we pushed along,
We swore, and spat, and smoked cheroots,
Kissed modest girls, and whistled loud,
And laughed, and screeched, and yelled like

7.

[brutes.

And then, if money could be raised,
To some low haunt of vice we went,
Where each according to his mind
His health consumed, his money spent.

8.

And so we led a jolly life—
At least we used to call it so ;
Bad sleep, ill-health, small cash, much blame,
Made it, I think, a life of woe.

9.

But now my days in comfort run,
In better things I find my joys,
Good books displace the pipe and glass,
And mission-work my time employs.

10.

At eight o'clock away I haste,
(A quarter past, I ought to say —
By extra time and pains I prove
That those do most who read and pray—)

11.

And to the Mission-house I go,
Where lives a Christian Irishman,
And take my tea and have a talk—
His name is Mr. Sullivan.

12.

Thus quickly slip the moments by,
In pleasure free from speck of sin,
Till the prayer-meeting hour arrives,
When people of all sorts come in.

13.

Then Mr. Sullivan expounds,
Or sometimes gentlemen of rank,
Who have the best of both the worlds—
Treasures above, and cash in bank.

14.

Irish and Scotch they mostly are :
Much food they offer for the soul ;
The Scotch, dry nuts in hardish shells ;
The Irish, pulp to swallow whole.

15.

An Englishman comes often too,
A great tall man of quiet mood,
He seldom speaks, but from his eyes
Shine lights of Heaven that do one good.

16.

But Mr. Sullivan for me !
For though his eloquence is small,
He says the thing he means to say,
His words I understand them all.

17.

It must not be supposed that I,
Because a man of humble class,
Am ignorant and dull of mind,
Perhaps I might—but let that pass—

18.

I would not seem to vaunt myself,
Whate'er I have to Heaven I owe :
Still it is only just and right,
That all who care to know should know

19.

That he who speaks is no mere dunce,
Half taught in some poor village-school ;
Nay, I've had opportunities,
And though religious am no fool.

20.

At lectures, penny-readings, plays
(Blame me who will), I've learnt to use
My intellects. I've also read
, Colenso', 'Essays and Reviews',

21.

And other deleterious works ;
' I've likewise studied the defence
'Gainst such attacks, till now I am
Myself a book of 'Evidence',

22.

A 'Paley Modernised'—or, say,
A David with his scrip and sling,
All ready, trusting in the Lord,
For infidel or anything.

23.

You will not, therefore, think me dull,
When I most solemnly declare,
As to the gentlefolks' attempts
At exposition and at prayer,

24.

That the intention of their talk
I mostly fail to comprehend,
Like snakes with tail in mouth it spins,
With neither legs, nor wings, nor end.

25.

In their own natural mode of speech
Clear sense they seldom can express,
But when they try simplicity—
O dear, O dear! the dreadful mess.

26.

Such funny little baby words
To make Heaven's awful mysteries plain—
We ought to be of childlike heart,
But surely not of childlike brain.

27.

Still, be their preaching weak or strong,
These gentlemen are means of good,
For though they puzzle poor men's wits,
They give them money, clothes, and food.

28.

And some of them go visiting
The lodgings where the wretched dwell;
Most Christian folk have tried this plan,
But few have found it answer well.

29.

For if a visitor comes in
With smart new coat, and rings of gold,
For gifts of cash the needy look,
And Gospel truths, alone, seem cold.

30.

Then if he brings his shillings forth,
Each time this self-same trick is done—
Sly, canting drunkards get the coins,
The self-respecting poor get none.

31.

And so your pious gentleman
To a much wiser system comes,—
He visits in the decent streets,
While folk like me explore the slums.

32.

My mission day is Saturday,
For then at Two shop-work is o'er,
(On Sabbath, day of rest, I go
Three times to church, and prayers before),

33.

And all the afternoon I give
To visiting the poor indeed ;
Rich people scarce could even guess
The wretched life these creatures lead.

34.

Each house is many stories high,
Each room a family contains ;
And there they breed, and breathe foul air,
Like rats inhabiting the drains.

35.

Though, when one comes to think of it,
The rats are far more clean and sweet ;
These people neither comb nor wash,
Rats trim their fur and keep it neat.

36.

O dear ! O dear ! the sights one sees !
In a close court the other day,
I saw some lean, large-stomached babes,
All busy at their childish play :

37.

They dabbled in the thick black slime,
Stuck fish-heads in and drew them out,
Made pies of stuff much worse than mud,
While fat blue-bottles buzzed about.

38.

Poor innocents ! for those who die
In early years what bliss untold,
To pass from filth and haddocks-heads
To seas of glass and streets of gold !

39.

I prayed an earnest prayer for them,
Then turned and climbed a winding stair
That smelt of cats, knocked at a door,
Half opened it, and looked in there.

40.

Notions do differ. Some good folk
Are to the poor quite rough behaved :
Push into rooms, hat on, and cry— [saved ?]
“ Well, how’s your soul ? Friend, are you

41.

Attention thus they hope to draw
By sudden pain or startling noise ;
As pedlars shout to puff their wares,
Or teachers lash their careless boys.

42.

But I have always liked to act
On 'Do as you'd be done by' rule,
And show the manners that I learned
At my dear native Berkshire school.

43.

Well, at the opening door I paused,
Stood still and just put in my chin,
Took off my hat, half bowed, and said—
"Good afternoon. May I come in?"

44.

An inner porch I then perceived ;
The door that moment open burst,
Out rushed two angry Irish wives,
And shook their fists, and raged and cursed.

45.

"Off with you, dirty Protestant !
You beast ! you devil ! get away."
(I cannot write their curious brogue,
But tell the things they meant to say.)

46.

On hearing this I breathed a prayer—
Which helps one much, and much protects—
"Don't call me Protestant," I said,
"All Christians don't belong to sects."

47.

"You're not a Christian, sure, at all ;
You're one that mocks God's mother mild."
"Blest above women she,"—says I.
I smiled, and then the women smiled.

48.

This kind of wide-mouthed Irish folk,
Change like a swallow in its flight ;
One, two,—they want to shed your blood,
Three, four,—they're friendly and polite.

49.

"Come in, Sir, come," the women said,
And wiping clean their only chair,
They moved it tow'rds me ; suddenly
I heard a growl as from a bear,

50.

And off his bed there leaped a man,
A huge, half-drunken, savage beast ;
He seized a knife, and ran at me ;
I stood, and did not budge the least,

51.

But fixed my eyes upon his eyes,
And cowed him through God's help—as when
An angel stopped the lions' mouths
From eating Daniel in the den.

52.

Then both the women made a rush,
And threw themselves upon the man,
And caught him by his arms and legs :
Oh ! what a dreadful scene began.

53.

They reel, they roll, they twist about,
(Like the three Greeks that fought with snakes—
One sees them in the plaster casts—)
The windows dance, the flooring shakes.

54.

As music at a wild-beast show
With roars and cries combines its strum,
So shouts, yells, howls together rose,
Rap, rap, went oaths like tap of drum.

55.

Crack goes the fellow's rotten shirt,
One half flies this way, one half that ;
But ere his trowsers also split,
The broad-backed women laid him flat,

56.

And put him helpless on his bed,
And tossed and turned him as they chose ;
He gave a few indignant snorts,
Then passed into a drunken doze.

57.

Thus fell the mighty—luckily ;
And now came pleasant times indeed,
The women so polite and kind,
So glad to hear me pray and read.

58.

They really scarce would let me go,
They hungered for the food of Life ;
Next week their zeal was just the same ;
The next, they chased me with a knife.

59.

The priest, of course, had come meanwhile,
And heavy threats upon them laid :
I owe no grudge ; as one might say,
He did it in the way of trade.

60.

But still when people take to hunt
A missionary down the street,
Then at their door—in Scripture phrase—
He shakes the dust from off his feet.

61.

Well, after that, I went to see
A far more quiet set than these :
An old Italian and his wife,
Who dealt in stucco images.

62.

Gambetti was their name, I think,
An inoffensive sort of pair ;
They scarcely knew one English word,
But treated me with courteous care.

63.

Such funny things upon their shelves,—
Queens, Holy Virgins, Neptune, Mars,
And several naked Goddesses,
Pigs, Angels, and a Prince with stars :

64.

Young Samuel kneeling in his shirt ;
Crusoe with parrot, gun, and goat ;
St. John in Patmos with a bird ;
And baby Moses in his boat :

65.

Dogs, cats, canaries, heroes, saints,
All green and scarlet, gold and blue ;
Things much too sacred to be named ;
The 'Dying Gladiator' too.

66.

(Some lines about that plaster cast
Quite long ago my fancy took—
'Butchered to make a holiday'—
I have them in my extract-book.

67.

And to myself, when people fail
In pious public-speech, I say—
'Butchered is this good gentleman
To make a Christian holiday.')

68.

Leaving Gambetti and his wife,
Another quiet call I made,
Within a rather decent house,
Where a sick, aged woman stayed.

69.

Midst weakness, loneliness, and pain,
Her every look seemed praise to sing ;
In heart she was a holy saint,
Though such a poor old doting thing.

70.

A few small comforts she possessed—
Whose lot is there that nothing mends?—
First place, a store of books, the gift
Of kind Episcopalian friends.

71.

Now, though to favour sect o'er sect
Is not my way, I must attest
That of all pious books I see,
Episcopalian are the best.

72.

So full of manly, simple faith,
So rich in warmth and sweet content,
No harsh malignant threatenings,
No cold hard-hearted argument.

73.

I'm speaking of the genuine thing,
The good old-fashioned stately school ;
Asses will bray in lion-skins,
And wolves will howl in coats of wool.

74.

So when I called on Widow Smith,
I chose some volume from her shelf
And read to her, and thus I got
No little profit for myself.

75.

For if a teacher never learns,
His prayers and talk grow weak and cold ;
As spiders that go spinning on
Spin webs at last that will not hold.

76.

Another joy the widow had,—
I am not one that strains at gnats,
I did not blame her foolish waste,—
She kept three lazy, greedy cats.

77.

What could the creatures get to eat?
No rats or mice would enter where
Provisions were so very scarce;
Cats surely cannot live on air—

78.

Though in such rooms the atmosphere's
Close substance might be almost carved,—
Quite strange it seemed to see them fat,
While Widow Smith was nearly starved.

79.

This is a contradiction odd,
Which meets you every day you live:
The rich most often like to keep,
The poor most often like to give.

80.

They get so little at a time
That thrift seems scarcely worth their pains;
At length they lose the power to save,
But spend, give, waste, till naught remains.

81.

Minds are, like bodies, slaves to use,
And wrongful habits mischief breed;
Crammed stomachs learn to hold too much,
Starved ones can't keep the food they need.

82.

Good Widow Smith! Some ten days thence,
When last that humble floor I trod,
Her poor old frame was stiff in death,
Her saintly soul had gone to God.

83.

'Had gone to God'—strange phrase, methinks!
As if some special house were His.
Is earth a place where God is not?
Let's say—'Her soul had gone to bliss.'

84.

I saw her just before she died,
Calm, trustful, patient, and resigned;
She would have been in perfect peace,
But for one thought that vexed her mind.

85.

Grasping my arm she drew me close—
I scarce could hear her voice at all,—
"Oh! Jonas, if it were His will,
I'd like a decent funeral."

86.

I kissed her brow, and pledged myself
That what she wished should come to pass;
Smiles swiftly flitted o'er her face,
As butterflies across the grass.

87.

Once more she smiled, then closed her eyes,
And never opened them again:
At set of sun she slipped away
Without a struggle or a pain.

88.

Perhaps it may appear unwise
That such a promise I should dare,
For funerals cost at least four pounds,
Much more than men like me can spare.

89.

But, at the worst, my watch and chain
Would perfectly have met the case—
Indeed I hardly thought of that,
I counted quite on Mr. Grace.

90.

Who's he? That would be hard to tell:
A gentleman of means, I know,
And one of station too, I think,
Though carefully avoiding show.

91.

This unpretending man might seem
Mere nothing to a common mind;
Coarse worldliness can't sympathise
With manners quiet, grave, and kind.

92.

If Abraham in London lived,
And angels went to see him there,
Think how his men in plush would treat
Such persons of unstylish air!

93.

Nay Jonas! grudge not fools their strut
In haunts with their own nature matched;
Cocks doubtless on Job's dunghill crowed,
While the great patriarch groaned and

94.

[scratched.

Hear this, ye evil serving-men—
Your trade, like all, has worst and best—
If you would thrive in both the worlds,
Show kindness to the humble guest.

95.

Why wound an unoffending soul
By insolence or rude neglect ?
You would not rob him of his purse,
Why rob him of his self-respect ?

96

Heaven grant your brutish manners come
From stupidity too great to tell ;
To harm another for harm's sake
Would prove you quite a child of Hell.

97.

By courteous conduct you may give—
'Stead of short words and scornful stares—
A cup of water to Christ's own,
Oblige an angel unawares ;

98.

And so have comfort when you die.
In all ways kindness serves your end,
A very common-looking man
May prove a most uncommon friend.

99.

But to return to Mr. Grace—
Small matter what his rank or name,—
When help was needed for the poor,
I always found him still the same

100.

In pleasant readiness to give.
This really seemed a little strange,
For in his spiritual state
No man could be more apt to change.

101.

Sometimes his eye beamed soft with joy,
His thoughts were all from realms above,
And bloomed in words like heavenly flowers
Rich with the fragrancy of love.

102.

"Jonas", he then would often say,
"How blest beneath God's care to live ;
A father, all whose gifts are good,
Who all that 's good will freely give.

103.

"Our health or sickness, weal or woe,
Alike are by a father sent ;
To make us rule our own life's lot
Would be a cruel punishment.

104.

"Goodness wins trust—behold our lives
Are in a perfect Being's hand :
How men can ever yield to gloom
It passes me to understand !"

105.

Sometimes, in Mr. Grace's looks
A different story one might read,—
Sad eyes, bent brows, and sallow cheeks,
As if his food had disagreed.

106.

And on such days no doubt it had ;
For indigestion's a disease
Which, with east winds especially,
Will shake the firmest Christian's peace.

107.

"Oh ! Jonas," then would be his strain,
"This life of ours is hard to bear ;
So little light upon our path,
Such weakness, weariness, and care.

108.

"Where can one turn for help or rest ?
The more I search the matter out,
The more religion seems obscure,
Its origin more wrapt in doubt.

109.

"If God is love, I cannot see
The need for Christ to intervene ;
If God is not love, how can aught
Poor creatures from his malice screen ?

110.

"Well, well, I'll never cease to pray :
If God is bad he will not care,
If God is nothing, nothing comes,
If God is good he'll hear my prayer."

111.

When Mr. Grace says things like that
In strangers' ears, they oft conclude
That he's a sort of infidel,
A person very far from good.

112.

I cannot blame them if they do—
Though highest law perhaps they break,
And show some want of charity—
But I assure them they mistake.

113.

Through ups and downs so singular,
Midst words and ways so strange and odd,
He lives most often in the love,
And always in the fear, of God,

114.

That he is a *converted* man
I would not venture to assert :
Such things as this he often says :—
“Converted ! what then means ‘convert’ ?

115.

“That men from sin to good should be
Converted, I can well conceive ;
From heathen idols unto Christ
Converted, I can quite believe.

116.

“But that a Christian in his creed,
Who leads an honest, decent life,
Should need ‘conversion’, under pain
Of Hell, is with all sense at strife.

117.

“You Puritans unjustly judge
Of things that to men’s souls relate.
From people’s bodies we demand
The work that suits their strength and state :

118.

“Who’d ask the lame to dance a jig ?
Yet in soul-things you ask of all
To be a small Apostle John,
Or else a miniature St. Paul.

119.

"For Heaven as Earth, the poet's right
In saying—'To thyself be true':
God would have made us all alike,
If all the same were bound to do,

120.

"Or bound to be. But some will say—
'Why, you've your choice 'twixt Paul and
'Twixt Mary's rest and Martha's toil, [John,
'Twixt peaceful thought or pushing on.'

121.

"So far so good: but there in fact
Their candour makes a sudden halt;
For, short of apostolic deeds,
They charge all action with default.

122.

"At best, a thing to tolerate
In creatures of mere earthly clay:
Religious work is crowned and throned,
Poor common work must stand away.

123.

"But never will my soul accept
The bondage of such systems prim:
Whate'er each man can do the best,
That is religious work for him."

124.

"But surely," then I'd interpose,
"Some works must other works excel
(Of good or harmless work we speak,
Excepting quite all deeds of Hell):

125.

"And would you say that farming land,
Or keeping shop to sell your wares,
Is equal work to winning souls
By preaching, visiting, and prayers?"

126.

"Perhaps," would answer Mr. Grace,
"Some works are higher in themselves.
But when we buy an implement,
'Tis not to ornament our shelves,

127.

"Nor do the work of other tools.
What would you think, my friend, if made
To dig your garden with a spoon,
And eat your pudding with a spade?"

128.

"E'en thus, as God has framed a man
In scope of mind or power of limb,—
To act according to his bent,
That is religious work for him.

129.

"I say not that a man should cease
To walk within a certain bound
Of circumstance by God arranged :
We use a spade to till the ground ;

130.

"But what that ground,—or sand, or mud,
Or peaty moss, or garden mould,—
The spade is not allowed to choose,
It delves away as it is told.

131.

"But (dropping parable) I deem
That if thine inmost thoughts should say—
I feel some power to help mankind,
To make or keep them wise or gay :

132.

"According as that power may be,
Toil thou, or write, or sing, or dance,
And give as much of this to God
As He permits through circumstance.

133.

"You, Jonas, have to trade and preach ;
Some have a scholar's work to do,
Or courtier's, soldier's, artist's work ;
And God will bless both them and you.

134.

"Then bless we him who blesses them—
Who blesses earnest workers all.
Let no one think that God requires
Each man to be a John or Paul."

135.

These utt'rances of Mr. Grace—
With many more too long to tell—
Are plausible if not quite sound ;
But, for myself, I know full well

136.

That when I follow out the work
Of visiting the poor and old,
Of preaching, praying, comforting,—
As in the Bible we are told

137.

That Christ's own people ought to do,—
I feel a joy within my heart
A thousand-fold more great than that
Which honest shop-work can impart.

138.

I will not argue, nor attempt
To tell the very reason why ;
Perhaps God's angels at such times
Come nearer us : go thou and try !

139.

I really must resume my tale—
To Widow Smith we'll now recur :
I went to Mr. Grace (I've said)
To ask the means to bury her.

140.

Says I, "I've come to make to you
Request for good old Widow Smith"—
"Dear, dear !" says he : "a case again
Of cash without and hunger with ?

141.

"How gladly had I sent her help
Before distress could make such head ;
You always come to me so late"—
"Stop, Sir," says I, "the widow's dead.

142.

"She wanted neither help nor food,
But one thing her whole heart did crave :
That, saved from pauper's lot, her corpse
Might rest within a decent grave.

143.

"For this I come to ask the means."
"All right," says he, "my purse is there.
What curious fancies people have !
Why should this poor old woman care

144.

"About her worn-out, battered frame,
While off to Heaven her spirit flits ?
When to a hair-cutter I go
I think not of the clipped-off bits ;

145.

"Or if a dentist draws my tooth
I heed not what its fate may be :
I value not such odds and ends,—
My cast-off vesture is not me."

146.

And so he'll talk and talk away ;
Yet, while these ugly things are said,
His soul is full of sympathy—
His heart is holier than his head.

147.

He little hopes for human praise,
To judge him by some words and acts ;
Yet, that he longs for human love
I do believe, in spite of facts

148.

That tend against it ; and, indeed,
He sometimes lays reserve aside,
And woos the world perhaps too much,
With gentleness too free from pride :

149.

Or so at least it seems to those
Who follow quite a different way,—
Meek where he's proud, proud where he's meek.
On this I once o'erheard him say :

150.

"You blame my complaisance ? In roads
Perplexed and strange one's way one picks.
If you were landed in the Moon
You'd strive to please the Lunatics.

151.

(*Lunarians* would have been more right.
He often used a jesting word
To hide or veil his earnestness,
When in his soul deep feelings stirred.)

152.

"From other views of good and ill
In earthly things my notions start,
Than those that you and most men take.
You are yourselves, I act a part.

153.

"My likes and loves, aversions, hates,
From other causes rise or fall :
My life would be one grand offence
If I were always natural.

154.

"And yet for fellowship I crave,
Mine is in truth a genial mind,
I mourn the fate that bids me live
In mystic exile from mankind."

155.

Poor Mr. Grace ! I do believe
That of all men whom griefs infest
Arising chiefly from the thoughts,
He was at times the wretchedest.

156.

But I forget to tell my tale
While talking about Mr. Grace.
After the widow's quiet room
I visited a rougher place ;

157.

A lofty, tumble-down old house,
With such a gloomy corkscrew stair ;
One could not see, but smelt, one's way,
And had to take the greatest care

158.

(For reasons which I will not tell) ;
Small danger threatened life or purse,
Though half the hundred habitants
Were thieves and prostitutes, and worse.

159.

A door stands open,—in I go :
Although I could not at first glance
See what that gloomy room contained,
I thought that I would try my chance ;

160.

Just as an angler, when he quits
His well-known favourite fishing-ground,
Will drop his bait in some dark pool,
To see if fish may there be found.

161.

And, sure enough, within that room
Were fish in plenty : for, behold,
A large deep wheelbarrow was there,
With herrings filled, of stench untold.

162.

Close by, an Irish-woman sat
On a low, broken, three-legged stool ;
Some children crawled and played around,
Quite old enough to be at school.

163.

This herring-dealer was indeed
A pretty woman of her kind—
Black eyes, white teeth, and rosy cheeks—
But not of looks at all refined ;

164.

And though her talk was nice enough,
I thought her manners rather coarse,
When a big boy, four years of age,
Came trotting up just like a horse,

165.

And down she stooped, and bared her breast,
And fed him as a beast might do :
I looked away, and turned to those
Who lived in this same lodging too.

166.

A wretched place for any one,
Close, damp, one-windowed, floored with clay ;
Except for a short hour at noon,
It scarcely saw the light of day.

167.

Yet in this pestilential hole
The herring-dealers, man and wife,
With an increasing family,
Seemed quite content to spend their life.

168.

And, spite of all, these people looked
Quite healthy, neither pale nor thin :
How full of vigour must have been
Their state of health when they came in !

169.

The other lodgers were a pair
Of Scotch-women—one young, one old,—
Who lived together as close friends ;
Mother and daughter I was told,

170.

But whether so they were or not
It little signifies,—alas,
Few mothers care to keep their girls
From sin, in that degraded class.

171.

A staid old woman too is this,
Whose manner confidence obtains—
As oft the case with Scottish folk,—
Yet shares her daughter's sinful gains ;

172.

A broad-faced, small-pox-pitted girl,
Samaria's wife of husbands seven,
Who copied, but increased the sum
By any number under heaven.

173.

Poor Jean was a good-natured thing,
Of cheerful voice and friendly ways,
Her coughing mother loved her well,
The Irish woman spoke her praise ;

174.

So active, helpful, neighbourly,
Like sunshine in that dismal den,
Of warm, unselfish, simple heart,
And honestly inclined,—but then

175.

This woman was a 'sinner'—ah !
Too well one knows what Hells lie spread
Beneath that phrase,—what griefs, reproach,
Contempt, in life ; what woes when dead.

176.

Alas ! I ne'er had Christian strength
To speak hard truth to such as she,
Denounce their awful wickedness,
And bid them from God's anger flee

177.

By instant turning from their crimes ;
At any cost to shun the curse,
Preferring 'ation' that begins
With 'starve', to one beginning worse.

178.

Heaven knows I would not sanction sin ;
But as a doctor cures disease
Deep-rooted in his patient's frame,
Not by one shock, but by degrees,

179.

Thus would I deal. I would not say—
Behold this potion! drink and live,
Refuse and die: I'd take my book
And give a Gospel alternative.

180.

I'd speak of purity and peace,
Of Him who wandering sinners seeks—
Tears oft would glisten in their eyes,
And sometimes trickle o'er their cheeks ;—

181.

And then we'd pray for heavenly grace,
For mighty faith that conquers doubt :
Thus much good medicine is put in,
And much foul poison driven out.

182.

Oh! never would I say a word
To favour wickedness so sad
As that girl's was. Yet will I say
That other sinners just as bad,

183.

And quite without the same excuse,
Are pampered, through a poor caprice,
By some who if she touched their skirt
Would instantly burn out the piece.

184.

Said Mr. Grace on this—" The texts
In Scripture, if one calculate,
'Gainst want of purity, are less
In length and strength than those 'gainst hate.

185.

"Yet when some doctrine-crotchet fills
A clergyman's excited brains,
He hurls the bitterest taunts around,
And murders worse than twenty Cains—

186.

"To take St. John's own simile,—
While those like prejudice who feel,
Thank God for such a holy saint,
Whose envious pride they praise as zeal.

187.

"They praise a wanton sin, but curse
A sin of need : Is it more good
To fill a neighbour's heart with rage,
Than fill a stomach with plain food?"

188.

"If people reasoned in that way,"
I answered, "'twere a better thing ;
But mostly they prefer to go
Like wild geese flying in a string,—

189.

"Or often in two strings, indeed,
Though towards the front their lines they lock,
And follow closely, beak to tail,
The greatest goose of all the flock."

190.

Says Mr. Grace—"It saves much thought.
But really I attempt in vain
To understand about the sins
Permitted to 'converted' men,

191.

"And those which are forbid to all
Who claim that happy character,
So arbitrary are the rules.
Now here's a doubt that will occur—

192.

"Take yon mean, crawling shop-keeper,
Whose heart is set on sordid pelf ;
He cheats as freely as he dares,
He cares for no one but himself ;

193.

"Yet, if the fellow has a turn
To help some holy sect along,
And use the jargon of their creed,
And pray their prayer, and sing their song ;

194.

"No matter though he live and move
In lying, cheating, bribery,—
'He has his frailties, Sir, yet still
A dear, believing brother he !'

195.

"Now take yon honest, brave old man—
A Navy Captain he has been,—
Who loves and is beloved by all,
Serves God as once he served his Queen ;

196.

"Reads in the prayer-book every day,
And every Sunday goes to church,
Gives freely of his scanty means,
And ne'er from honour makes a lurch :

197.

"Is he 'converted'? Heaven forbid!
A 'dear believer'? Blight the thought!
This sinner sometimes lets an oath
Escape; so Christ for him is naught."

198.

"I think," said I, "I see the cause
That made such special rules begin;
One needs a set of outward signs
To show what people are within."

199.

"In time of war a volunteer
Caught shooting in his common wraps,
Is strung up by the enemy
As a mere murderer: thus, perhaps,

200.

"The holy men of old decreed
What signs should show a state of grace,
What signs a state of nature, so
That none might wear a double face."

201.

"And though the rules are incomplete,
And set aside with small excuse,
Yet still for curbing open sin
The plan is surely full of use."

202.

"Quite so," said Mr. Grace. "I wish
That these same rules still farther went,
And people showed their state of heart
By forms of dress. One might invent

203.

"Such niceties of cut and style,
Of button, pocket, pattern, hue,
That not a change within our souls
But all the world would know it too.

204.

"The rule already works; his state
A Quaker partly thus denotes.
Besides, one seldom ever sees
Believers in short shooting-coats".

205.

To mind a little mockery
Against one's creed shows want of wits
Or faith: a peach eats none the worse
Though some one laugh at rotten bits.

206.

And under Mr. Grace's scoffs
At Low Church views, I often find
A secret love for what he strikes,
A certain struggle in his mind

207.

Whilst banning what he fain would bless.
E'en in his hardest, bitterest mood,
He'll mend his blame in words like this—
"With all their faults they do much good."

208.

I've heard him say: "Among my friends,
Some of the best in word and deed—
Yes, some the dearest to my heart—
Have held this stony, narrow creed.

209.

"And, for their sakes, I fain would feel
Some love for what they loved so well,
Believe what they have so believed,
Strive for their Heaven and dread their Hell.

210.

"But no, no, no,—it cannot be.
I dare not quench the light of truth.
'Necessity is on me laid'
To battle, without fear or ruth,

211.

"Sapphira-Ananias creeds,
Which hold a gospel up to view,
But pocketing a part of it
Cheat Heaven and Earth of half their due.

212.

"While on God's schemes of 'Saving Grace'
Combined with 'Justice' loud they prate,
His justness, father-hood, and love,
They struggle to annihilate.

213.

"Why, if I heard a man decry
My father, e'en with fair intent,—
Would not I answer him? So I
Towards blasphemies, howe'er well meant."

214.

How sad to hear such terms applied
To such *respectable* beliefs
(To take the lowest ground) as those
That make my joys and soothe my griefs!

215.

Still, even Mr. Grace himself
Is far too candid to deny,
That these same doctrines which he hates
Are very much supported by

216.

St. Paul's epistles, and by texts
Both in the Gospels and the Acts ;
While views of universal good
Are surely not borne out by facts ;

217.

For all around us we behold
Much less of love than pain and death.
To grasp the thought that ' God is love '
Requires a mighty gift of faith.

PART II.

1.

IN houses where the Irish live,
They congregate in numbers dense ;
Far more than other sorts of folk
They have an instinct, or a sense,

2.

To crowd in dens where scarce a whiff
Of foreign air can interfere
With that delight which patriots find
In breathing native atmosphere.

3.

And, sure enough, to nose like mine,
Well practised in unsavoury scents,
Each crowded lodging-house at once
Its nationality presents.

4.

Though in the main they smell alike,
They differ yet—as flower from flower—
The Irish odour from the Scotch,
The former rank, the latter sour.

5.

But even houses of that class
Some tidy families contain—
The Clares and Connells, now, were such,
Neat wives, and decent sort of men.

6.

It always was a treat to see
How Mrs. Connell's soft blue eyes
Would glisten when the opening door
Revealed my humble self;—surprise

7.

At her good luck, and my kind thought
In coming; such a welcome too,
A blessed look that seemed to say,
"Dear Jonas! is it really you?"

8.

How she would hang upon my lips,
(Of course you understand the phrase?
Would listen to my words, I mean.)
She loved to learn True Wisdom's ways.

9.

A nice contented set; supplied
With food enough and clothes and pence,
And children, and a grandmother—
Rheumatic, but with gleams of sense.

10.

Ah! Dives, 'tis in homes like these
That solid happiness is found,
While you, within your gilded halls,
Turn Pleasure's weary treadmill round.

11.

Yes, yes, 'tis so where God is served,
And angel steps bring heavenly dew,
But where the Devil plants his hoof
All sorts of miseries ensue.

12.

How happy once the humble Clares !
A stout young railway navvy he,
A Protestant, an honest man ;
A handsome Ulster woman she,

13.

With cold grey eye but pleasant smile,
Tall, slight, and full of strength and life,
Clean, active, truthful, wisely proud,
A careful mother, loving wife.

14.

Alas, what danger dogs our way !
A Patriarch e'en towards mischief tends—
See Samson's fall, and David's crime—
Young Clare took up with evil friends.

15.

Poor Emily Clare ! some shade of blame
Might somehow somewhere rest on you ;
But what had done your babe unborn
That it should prove so foul to view ?

16.

Inscrutable the ways of Heaven !
Whate'er Ezekiel may allege,
When 'fathers eat of sour grapes'
Their 'children's teeth' *are* 'set on edge.'

17.

Doubtless, for 'Scripture cannot lie,'
Next world will heal and straighten all :
'Tis ours to bow to Heaven's decree—
And never let Sin's 'wages' fall.

18.

For if, to check crime's consequence,
We use the power that laws afford,
We plunder crime of half its dread,
And balk the vengeance of the Lord—

19.

One shudders at the very thought !—
When plague the land of Israel fired,
Because of David's foolishness,
And seventy thousand Jews expired ;

20.

Suppose the conscience-stricken king,
Instead of prayer and prophet's breath,
Had set police against the plague
To stamp it out—How much for faith ?

21.

But all the same 't was very sad
To see what sorrow fell on Clare ;
His babe a blight, his wife a wreck,
His happy home a ruin bare.

22.

And with the poor, hard fact it is,
That when a devil once gets in,
Seven worse ones come to lend a hand—
Drink, Dirt, and Cruelty begin.—

23.

This tale has touched on painful things,
My next shall have a theme more bright—
A poor old Irish beggar-man
From darkness brought to Gospel light.

24.

'Twas thus it chanced : I passed a room,
The door of which was open thrown,
Stepped in and looked, saw no one there,
Went on,—when lo ! I heard a groan,

25.

Proceeding from a close box-bed
That stood within a deep recess :
Upon it lay an aged man,
In utter rags and wretchedness.

26.

"My friend," said I, "it grieves my heart
To hear you. Are you in much pain ?
Why do they leave you by yourself ?"
He answered not, but groaned again.

27.

"Have you no wife to care for you ?
No neighbour ?" Here he faintly said :
"Sure, with the basket she's gone out—
Oh no, we never want for bread."

28.

"But is there nothing I can do ?
Some comfort I would gladly give."
He closed his eyes—"No use," said he,
"I have but a few days to live."

29.

I thought a moment, then replied,
"In that case, let me not condole ;
For God, I trust, will make the change
Eternal blessing to your soul."

30.

"'Tis He that can," the old man sighed,
"But if I fear to die, small blame ;—
To pass a hundred years, perhaps,
In Purgatory's cruel flame."

31.

"Think not", said I, "that 'tis my wish
To see you from your Church enticed ;
But fain would I remove your fear
Of death. Do you believe in Christ?"

32.

"Ah ! that I do," says he. "Well then",
Says I, "just listen to some facts."
Then from my Testament I read
The sixteenth chapter of the Acts.

33.

'How the Philippian jailor kept
Silas and Paul with fetters tied ;
How angels freed them, whereupon
He meditated suicide ;

34.

'But, hindered in his rash attempt,
How for Salvation's way he craved ;
How holy Paul instructed him—
'Believe, and thou shalt straight be saved':

35.

' And how, believing 'with his house',
They all did instantly 'rejoice'—
"No penance ordered, only this,
Believe, be glad (I raised my voice),—

36.

"No Purgatory threatened, no :
No limiting Christ's power to save ;
Immediate victory over Hell ;
Joy here, and joy beyond the grave.

37.

"*There* is a Gospel! *there!*" says I,
" 'Glad Tidings,' as the Angel sings."
The poor man raised himself, and cried—
"God bless the mouth that says such things!

38.

"His Reverence, now, told awful tales
Of pains of hunger, flames and drought :
I meant to leave him all my clothes,
To pay the priests to pray me out—

39.

"But now I'll give him ne'er a rag.
'Believe, be glad'—praise God that's plain!
Sir, would it trouble you too much
To read that Scripture once again?"

40.

"Gladly," said I, "but let me say
I make no quarrel with your priest ;
I merely tell you truth ; if he—"
"Sure then, he is a greedy beast.

41.

"Don't waste your breath on such as he,
But give me more of holy Paul ;
As much as you can spare to-day :
And oh ! be sure you often call,

42.

"And comfort my old weary heart,
And make me almost glad to die."
I read with him, and talked, and prayed :
We parted with a warm goodbye.

43.

Twice more I saw him ; then a while
Hard shop-work chained me to my place.
One evening to the Mission-house
I went, and there found Mr. Grace.

44.

"Well Jonas, what's your news?" said he,
"What Ebenezer columns reared ?
What thrusts in old Apollyon's ribs?"—
Door opened : Sullivan appeared.

45.

A pious man was Sullivan,
Most humble too in deed and thought,
But hated Papists and their creed
More bitterly than Christians ought.

46.

Smiles beamed now in his small black eye,
And creased his pale pock-pitted cheek.
Says Mr. Grace, "Well met indeed,
I have not seen you for a week ;

47.

"And all my soul's athirst for news,
Which Jonas here will not unfold"—
Says Sullivan, "I've news of him
Worth more than houses filled with gold."

48.

"Enlighten us," said Mr. Grace.
"Dear Sir," the other slow replied,
"He met a Papist beggar-man,
Saw him but thrice before he died,

49.

"Yet, such the power to Jonas lent
To save that old man's soul from death,
Poor Corny drove the priests away,
And told them with his latest breath,

50.

"That he believed in Christ, and feared
No purgatorial flame when dead.
They did not get his all—his clothes—
He left them to his wife instead!"

51.

"Come, come!" said Mr. Grace, "that's good!
A mortal blow for scarlet Rome—
A soul purloined!—its small-clothes too
Filched by old Lazara at home!"

52.

"Sir," answered Sullivan, displeased,
"Heaven makes no count of great or small.
It joys, I joy, to see a soul
Saved from perdition—that is all."

53.

"O wondrous force of prejudice—
Or bringing-up, to speak more fair"—
Said Mr. Grace ; "behold a man
Of sense and godly character,

54.

"Who tells me that to endless woe
A soul by Heaven is doomed indeed—
For crime ?—for Paganism ?—nay :
For error in its Christian creed !

55.

"To hear such paltry heartlessness
Ascribed to God, so wounds me I
Can scarce refrain me from the prayer—
'Lord, let thy weary servant die.'

56.

"No love for Rome inspires my breast ;
But if a Protestant I live,
'Tis but as making choice between
Lie positive, or negative."

57.

"Oh surely, Mr. Grace," said I,
"No well-instructed man could choose
Their superstitious mummeries
In preference to our Bible-views ?"

58.

"O'er mummeries we need not fret,"
Says he, "where merely childishness ;
Their superstitions, in the main,
Are verities in over-dress—

59.

"Not always verities indeed,
But what yourselves as such would class :—
Does Christ come specially at times
To earth—then why not in the Mass ?

60.

"A Hades-school for untrained souls
Your thorough Protestant denies ;
Rome's purgatory saves a truth,
Though stifling it with many lies.

61.

"Think you that brutish souls at once
Through faith are fit to see God's face ?
A foul, low soul, e'en penitent,
In Heaven—how it would hate the place !

62.

"Forgiven, yes ; and set in paths
Of peace and progress—that is all :
The soul's identity were swamped
If changed by means mechanical.

63.

"So likewise about Holy Works :
'Tis false to call them 'filthy rags,'
But false to found a claim on them—
One view runs rash, the other lags.

64.

"But better, sure, to make too much
Of works that tend to human good,
Than blur their lustre by dispraise
Born of a logic hard and rude.

65.

"Again, the doctrine that paid prayers
Of venal priests with Heaven avail
To help a disembodied soul,
Is but a wicked old-wife's tale.

66.

"But better hold an idiot creed,
Which yet allows that through the mist
That separates souls in different spheres
Sweet fellowship may still exist ;

67.

"Than hold with callous Calvinists,
That when some loving friend expires,
Your soul remains fast bound to earth,
His flies to Heaven's bliss, or Hell's fires ;

68.

"And thenceforth—till some day remote,
Or possibly for evermore,—
His soul and yours must dwell apart ;
No messenger from shore to shore

69.

"To bear strong thrills of deathless love,
Your prayers, his yearning thoughts, to tell—
Rather than rest in such belief
I'd be an oyster in its shell ! "

70.

"It grieves me, Mr. Grace," said I,
"To hear such sentiments proceed
From one so generally esteemed—
It grieves me very much indeed.

71.

"For though I strive for Christian breadth,
And shun sectarian, narrow views,
I have no sympathy with Rome.
Her weak disciples I excuse—

72.

"Perhaps too gently treat their faiths—
But her strong priests I'd ne'er abet :
They're 'bloody, bold, and resolute',—
And, Sir, I fear they'll catch you yet."

73.

He smiled a curious, cautious smile ;
"Jonas," said he, and took my hand,
"I like your kindly care for me,
But some things you misunderstand.

74.

"Now here, in presence of our friend
(Whose looks some while have lost their zest),
And (speaking with all solemn truth)
In face of Heaven, I do protest,

75.

"That not one fibre of my heart
Towards Rome and Romanism seeks,—
That ere I'd rest in such a creed
I'd worship cats and garden leeks.

76.

"You doubt me? Hear the reason why
With Rome I ne'er could be content :—
Her doctrines I might tolerate,
But not her priestly government.

77.

"Thus should a free-born Briton speak,
When Rome would tice him to her chain :—
'Avaunt ! In sight of simplest bird
The open snare is set in vain.

78.

" 'A God I have whom I adore,
A wife I have whom much I love,
I want no middle-man 'twixt me
And her on earth, and God above.

79.

" 'I care not (like that King of old)
To hear a haughty priest repeat—
'Your God, I hold him in my hand ;
Your wife, I have her at my feet.' "

80.

He stopped. Then slow said Sullivan,—
"It's thankful that I am to hear
That you are steady in the faith ;
But yet, Sir, 'I rejoice with fear.'

81.

"We are but 'earthen vessels,' and
'Let him who standeth dread a fall' ;
If God should leave you to yourself
You might be snared in spite of all."

82.

"Just so," said Mr. Grace, "I might,
Bereft of all that keeps one wise,
Dance naked down St. James's Street,
With pickled onions in my eyes."

83.

I could not help but smile, to think
Of Mr. Grace in such a state ;
"Dear Sir," said I, "you make one laugh,
Yet gravely should we contemplate

84.

"The danger of perversion : see
How people of all ranks and sects,
Lords, ladies, clergy,—statesmen too,
Men of superior intellects,

85.

"Who make our land admired abroad
As well as satisfied at home,—
Board-wage their consciences, and take
A journey to the Church of Rome.

86.

"I tremble lest on me might come
This rinder-pest of souls, also :
Forewarned forearmed, pray tell me, Sir,
The reason why these people go."

87.

"Ask me, good Jonas," he replied,
"To probe for you the secret springs
Of all diseases that infect
The frames of us poor human things,"

88.

"And you will set an easier task
Than when you ask me to explain
The thousand causes that produce
This pestilence of heart and brain.

89.

"To change your sect or creed at all,
Shows more or less a want of sense—
Unless indeed you take the step
From motives of convenience"—

90.

"Stay, stay," said I, "you cannot mean
To set mere selfishness on high
O'er conscience?" "In this case," said he,
"I partly do: I'll tell you why:—

91.

"People who change on worldly grounds,
Still for some sense esteemed may be;
While those whom conscience leads to change,
Display an imbecility,

92.

"An ignorance of relations right
'Twixt man's small view and God's vast scope,
A want of judgment, patience, faith,
That lowers them beyond all hope.

93.

"To dream that He in whom the worlds
Have life and order should take note,
And jot down in his judgment-book,—
That Reverend Smithkin wears a coat

94.

"Not quite of cut celestial,—or
That Sandy Sanderson will choose
Instead of praying on his knees
To pray upon his hob-nailed shoes,—

95.

"That Sarah Jane creation shocks
By singing Wesley through her nose—
Oh what a universe it were
If God were such as they suppose!"

96.

He paused. "I rather like," said I,
"The view you urge, though not content
To hold it as a truth beyond
The reach of doubt and argument.

97.

"For, as the old Scotch proverb tells,
Littles make mickles': and, likewise,
Man is so small compared to God
No work of his can have much size."

98.

"True," answered he, "but ne'ertheless
Sound sense finds some things small, some
Less grief a pebble in your boot, [great,—
Than forfeiture of an estate."

99.

"Excuse my arguing," said I;
"Might not the pebble you suggest,
More fret one's temper, make one sin,
Than loss of all that one possessed?"

100.

"Thus possibly these people feel
The petty matters you despise
Affect their soul's health, and become
Important matters in God's eyes?"

101.

"Well argued, friend," said he, "but then
A firm distinction you should draw
'Twixt things important to yourself,
And those important in the law

102.

"Of their own being. And I hold
The cause of all that morbid doubt
Which leads a man to change his Church
Is, looking inwards and not out.

103.

"View things as they affect mankind,
Set your own special case aside,
Gaze strong at God, and trust his power
And will to prove your perfect guide.

104.

"Reject the thought that common-sense
Was given alone for earthly turns,
While some strange sense is requisite
In judging piety's concerns.

105.

"Trust ever in the Lord your God,
And use his gift of common-sense;
Then little need you fear to fall
Beneath the Romish influence."

106.

"Amen!" said Sullivan, "but, Sir,
Would you explain the motives, please,
Which drive such different sorts of minds
To these abhorred apostacies."

107.

"Well, well, I'll try," said Mr. Grace,
"To find some samples—best or worst.
I'll give you—just to clear my throat—
A 'cheap and nasty' specimen first :

108.

"The simply selfish, *Sordid Mind* :
As when some toadying cross-bred cub,
Or huckster knave, would make of Rome
A useful fashionable Club.

109.

"Omnivorous Rome ! the trading knave
For coarser food in store she keeps ;
The cub chews quick, then spits him out
To rot upon her rubbish heaps.—

110.

"But let us leave these paltry rogues,
Retailers keen for petty pay,
Cheap Judases who sell their Lord
For two-pence halfpenny a day.

111.

✓ "View now the nobler *Student Mind*.
Some grubber in historic lore
Finds Rome so ancient he forgets
The ancientness that went before ;

112.

✓ "Stares at her vellums till his eyes
Grow feeble, and he cannot see
That out of nothing nothing comes,—
That fraud, suppression, forgery,

113.

"Mar her best documents, as things
Worth aught in evidence to call;
Nay, that for decades after Christ
She had no documents at all.

114.

"Ah me! I almost weep for Rome,
To think what woe on her must lie,
When pondering o'er her foolish waste
Of splendid opportunity.

115.

"Oh! had but men of modern skill
Of her old rulers held the place,
How different would their work have been,
How different would have been her case.

116.

"Her dogmas clear, her goddess throned,
Distinct her claim to hold the keys:
(Instead of artless frauds like that
Of the 'Three Heavenly witnesses'; —

117.

"From which the Athanasian creed
Its tigrish inspiration draws,
Mumbling much mystery through its teeth,
And rattling its damnation clause.)

118.

"Where would our Bible then have been?
The Decalogue torn limb from limb,
Paul up the flue in ashes sent,
And half the Gospels after him!

119.

“ ‘Nay, but the documents are there!’—
Some friend of Rome perhaps will cry—
‘And we declare them sound and good,
And all your calumnies deny.’

120.

“Well, grant the records good : what prize
Are stocks whence fruit of badness comes?
Who’d eat a basketful of sloes
Because the lid was labelled ‘Plums’?

121.

“God gave to man his moral sense
That all around him he might look,
And prove and judge the actual worth
Of men or man’s, of Church or book.

122.

“I bid not each man by himself
To use his sole unaided wits,
And settle with unerring tact
What moral conduct most befits

123.

“The race or individual : nay,
No man is safely his own law
For moral more than civil code ;
His light and guidance he should draw

124.

“From the fixed laws which rule his land,
From prayer and inner consciousness,
From the experience of the best
In every age and every place ;

125.

"And closely should he heed the strains
Of the Age-spirit's mighty song,
The requiem of weak, waning powers,
The cradle-chant of young and strong.

126.

"O Rome, thine ancient ears are deaf
To that immortal harmony,
Dulled are they by the piteous cries
Of myriad victims slain by thee !

127.

"Methinks no happier sight there is
Beneath heaven's broad resplendent dome,
Than to behold how Nemesis
Companions Jezebel of Rome.

128.

"She that hath loved and lived on lies,
Her eyes are now with lies too rife
To see aught true ; she goes to death,
When seeing true might save her life.

129.

"Friend Jonas, have you heard of him
Who plans for the first railway laid
Before a high and mighty Board ?
Up spoke the Chairman—'I'm afraid

130.

"Your scheme is dangerous. Suppose
A cow got on your railway, now ?'
Up spoke the undaunted engineer—
'So much the worse, Sir, for the cow.'

131.

"E'en so, the train of time rolls on,
On lines from which it will not lurch;
And if a Church impede its way—
So much the worse for that same Church.—

132.

"But, apropos of time and trains,
'Tis time to leave this train of thought.
I've passed my proper halting-place,
And travelled farther than I ought.—

133.

"Let's turn now to the *Shallow Mind*:
One trained to think, as boy and youth,
The Romish creed a total lie,
The Protestant a perfect truth.

134.

"When riper knowledge shows his swan
A goose, his goose a sort of swan,
Forth starts the silly simple lad,
Puts one creed off, the other on;

135.

"And finds when it is somewhat late—
For few a bold retreat will dare—
That both his birds are geese indeed,
While swans disport themselves elsewhere.

136.

"Next view the *Artist-Poet Mind*:
His course is not unlike the last;
The Protestantic barrenness
Revolts, a spell is o'er him cast

137.

"By Rome's gay gauds of hue and dress
And song, he weds the harlot straight.
Faugh! paint and tinsel choke him soon,
While truth, love, beauty, elsewhere wait."

138.

"Pray stop one moment, Mr. Grace,"
Said I; "allow me just to state
One little thing. You'd no more wish,
I'm certain, to exaggerate

139.

"The faults of enemies than of friends:
I've always heard, or read at least,
That Rome, however bad her ways,
Excelled in works of art and taste."

140.

He laughed. "No doubt at all," said he,
"The harlotry knows how to dress,
And beats the Protestant maids
In artificial prettiness.

141.

"But when you view her piece by piece,
You find her charms mere surface sham;
To use a homely phrase, Rome's art
Is no more art than 'mutton's lamb.'

142.

"A time there was when art supreme
Reigned o'er one favoured spot on earth,
When every touch of Grecian hand
New forms of beauty brought to birth.

143.

"Then came eclipse. Then Pagan Rome,
Of iron gripe and iron head,
With slaughter sated turns for change
To art's pacific joys instead.

144.

"Her sculpture apes the works of Greece :
Alas, for all her barbarous pains,
No forms celestial she begets,
But bull-necked braves of bulbous brains.

145.

"She builds : see true proportion thinned
And lengthened, clumsy ornament thrown
Unaptly, arches reared, the whole
Of stilted heaviness like her own.

146.

"Thus on she goes from bad to worse.
At length her Pagan lights depart ;—
But the new semi-Christian creed
Had small affinity with art.

147.

"Eclipse again. Then gradual spring
The Gothic types ; and noble shrines
Uprise for the new serpent-power
Which round men's souls and bodies twines.

148.

"But how deserves *she* praise for art,
Who kept the human race in chains,
Vouchsafing knowledge just enough
To serve her when she picked their brains!

149.

"Behold such stately Gothic forms
As Canterbury, Salisbury, York;
Laud ye the priests who raised the cash?
I laud the men who raised the work—

150.

"The grand Masonic brotherhood :—
Whose sons the graceless harlot slays,
Yet points to their sires' work, and cries—
'That work is mine; bow down and praise.'

151.

"Mark yet again. This holy Rome,
Nurse of the arts and all that's high—
Her painting? For long centuries
The poor and stunted progeny

152.

"Of monkish brains: then rapid growth
When worldly men take up the brush,
Yet stunted: then the glorious time
When knowledge with resistless rush

153.

"Floods all the realms. Ah! then appear
Raphael and Michael Angelo,
Titian, Da Vinci;—see the art
Supreme, it can no farther go.

154.

"'Behold,' the arch-harlot cries once more,
'These works are mine: down on your knees!
Thine! thou mendacious brazen-brow,
Those works were born of Pagan Greece.'"

155.

"But, Sir," said I,— "to be quite fair—
Why trace them off so far from home?
Instead of saying Pagan Greece,
Why not at least say Pagan Rome?"

156.

"Perhaps," he answered, "one might say,
Of Greece through Rome; but all that's best
Derives from Greece. The Romish Church—
High source and arbiter of taste,

157.

"As people choose to count her now,—
Ne'er taught the artist's mind to deem
Beauty and Truth art's noble goal;
She strictly limited his theme

158.

"To matters germane to herself,—
Saints, virgins, superstitious shows;—
Praise Heaven! the manly Hebrew books
Gave subjects better far than those,

159.

"When art began to lift her head,
Waking from her long death-like trance.
Now here's a piece of precious stuff
That Romanisers oft advance:

160.

"Our sacred Church—alone 'tis hers
To teach the artist to express,
Through her high influence on his soul,
Pure, spiritual holiness;

161.

"An art (beyond dull Protestants)
Such as in Fra Beato charms,—
Yes—or in Lippi with his nun,
Or Raphael in his harlot's arms.

162.

"Dear, dear old Rome, it will not do ;
Dilemma's horns in wrath upstart :
Your sainthood's either friends with sin,
Or, sainthood's not the source of art.

163.

"And see again—this Church of taste
Who in our teeth her Gothic throws,
Made no demur to change her style
When classic influences rose ;

164.

"But, charmed with shams, adopted straight
That style of all to be despised—
The bastard ancient Roman art,
By moderns doubly bastardized."

165.

"What of St. Peter's?" I inquired ;
"A wonder of the world they say."
"Best flow'r," he answer'd, "of a plant
Fraught with the seeds of quick decay.

166.

"Few works of man, however false,
But win some majesty from size :
Bold genius planned St. Peter's fane,
Charm it may not, it must surprise.

167.

"But in its might it stands alone,
Its humbler brethren all are bad,
While the most petty work of Greece
Has charms to make an angel glad.

168.

"View that poor modern-ancient Rome,
Where priests have worked their utter will,
Those Jesuit heaps of ponderous stones,
Whose aspect might suffice to kill

169.

"Men of free mind ;—view these all ye
That vaunt the Church a school of art—
A school of jail-keeping, methinks,
If outward signs speak inward heart."

170.

Said Sullivan, "I've never been
At Rome ; but hereabouts, I know,
Their churches, virgins, painted glass,
And candles, make a pretty show.

171.

"And, though I hate their wicked ways,
I can't but in my heart admit
Their great advantage over us,
In having everything so fit

172.

"To captivate the carnal mind."
"Yes, Mr. Grace," said I, "why scoff
Against their practices, just where
They really seem to hit it off?"

173.

"Oh, if you talk of *prettiness*,"
Said Mr. Grace, "I don't dispute
Their claims in that respect : but as
I hold the roughest human brute

174.

"Who walks this earth a perfect man,
To be far higher than the thing
That guards a jealous Sultan's home—
E'en so, in my imagining

175.

"I more respect the rudest barn,
Bare, but with no unmanliness,
Than Rome's religious theatres
In their man-woman gauds of dress.

176.

"One self-same character she stamps
On every work that meets the eye—
A sacred sweetness feigned and sad,
The smile of patient slavery :

177.

"On all her works—on crucifix,
On book, on image, or on song,
On painted form of nun or saint,—
On all that doth to her belong.

178.

"Where now the bright and glorious Christ—
A sun-god risen from his tomb—
That glads the earliest monuments
In each old Christian catacomb ?

179.

"Where now the noble hero-forms
Of Abraham, Moses, Jesse's son?
Of brave Elijah, scourge of kings,
Of sage majestic Solomon?

180.

"Where Miriam, Judith? Where the glow
Of that blest Mary's stately face,
Whose woman-hood the substance framed
Of the great Saviour of our race?

181.

"Where strong Apostle, Martyr bold?
Where earnest Paul, where zealous John?—
All mixed into one tasteless mess
With lying priest and feigning nun:

182.

"All leering with the self-same leer
Of saccharine hypocrisy,
With faintly smiling meagre lips,
And slyly humble downcast eye,—

183.

"With just a shade of sideward look,
As schoolboy, conscious of a blot
In conduct, eyes his pedagogue,
And stammers out, 'I did it not.'

184.

"Accursed priests—true sons of those
Bloat idlers who laid heavy loads
On Israel—when we ask for bread
You feed us upon sugared toads!—

185.

"Observe, my friends, how rash it is
To ask me questions ; you've incurred
Long disquisitions, when indeed
I hardly meant to say a word.

186.

"But as I see 'tis still your wish
To have another class or two
Of perverts brought to book, I'll try
My best—the best no more can do.

187.

"I'll give you now a lighter type—
The *Selfish, Vain, Ill-balanced Mind*—
A type which in the female sex
Perhaps more frequently we find.

188.

"Her crave to be admired and sought,
And somehow noticed, e'en by hate,
Is marked by the sly priestly band,
Who trap her with the proper bait.

189.

"She would not change her principles
For bribes worth all the world, not she !
If bluntly offered,—but the tongue
Of flattering soft cajolery

190.

"Proves irresistible when used
By fascinating well-bred men ;
Heaven's holy celibates no doubt—
The neuters of man's hive,—but then—

191.

" Suppose that charming female saints
Beset with kindness you or me,
And wooed confessions from our lips,
How very dangerous it would be !

192.

" But some there are of meaner type,
Of delicacy much less prim,—
The fox no careful cunning needs
To capture these, they capture him.

193.

" See yon sour sallow spiteful maid,
Of unwashed soul and half-washed face,
Whose only matrimonial chance
Would be, to seek some barbarous place

194.

" Where by good fortune she might meet
And charm a mateless Caliban,—
She tries her useless skill to snare
An ordinary Christian man ;

195.

" But vain her chignon, fast discourse,
And fascinating high-heeled lurch ;—
And so in sick self-love she turns
For comfort to the Romish church.

196.

" Her father talks, her mother weeps,
Her sisters scold,—oh ! such a stir !
Her brothers, wiser, only laugh,
This fuss is ' meat and drink ' for her.

197.

"It never enters her poor mind,
That modest gentleness at home
Might bring her sympathy and love,—
She makes her wilful way to Rome.

198.

"Turned over to a well-trained priest,
He sees her soul through its new birth :
She may, some day, 'lead apes in Hell,'
He, martyr-like, leads one on earth.

199.

"O happy ape! her vanity
Finds coin enough to serve all needs,
In such forced kindness from the priests
As doctors give sham invalids.—

200.

"But vanity, and foolish crave
For notoriety, attach
To male as well as female minds ;
Let's draw a sample from the batch.

201.

"Behold yon *Puff-brained Clergyman*,
Once mighty with the bat or oar,—
A craze about his dignity
As parson blights him to the core.

202.

"Like fond Narcissus, who of old
In a clear fountain viewed his face
And loved and pined, he views himself,
Adores, pines off from manliness.

203.

"Unheeding all his people's needs,
Unable to forbear or bear,
He stuffs his ritual down their throats,
To stop their cries for Christian fare ;

204.

"And tells what children read in books,
By peep-show symbols on stained glass—
He is no knave, nor yet a fool,
But wholly, utterly, an ass—

205.

"A patient, strong, hardworking beast,
Kicked, kicking, of a mournful bent,
And changeless in its dull conceit,
Callous to force, prayer, argument.

206.

"Easy to prophesy his end ;—
At Rome such specimens find their shelves ;
The priests, if wishful, make him soon
Ten-fold more Hell's child than themselves."

207.

Said I, "For English clergymen
Who Romanise there's no defence :
To act against the folk that pay,
Is getting cash on false pretence.

208.

"It seems to me far better, Sir,
That such false Judases should throw
Disguises off, pack up their trunks,
Take train, and to the Papists go."

209.

Said he, "As I remarked before,
They are not knaves, however odd,
But in good conscience mean to serve
Their Church, their people, and their God.

210.

"And, though indeed I took the case
Of larger ears than intellect,—
A type of many,—there are some
For whom I feel profound respect.

211.

"True-hearted, Apostolic men,
Who 'daily die' yet daily live,
One foot in Heaven and one on earth,
One hand to bless, and one to give.

212.

"Content to hide the noble fire
Of their trained minds, despising fame,
They flood dark places with God's light,
And magnify their Saviour's name."

213.

"Why, Mr. Grace," said Sullivan,
"You're joking surely? To express
Such sentiments! Like Balaam, quite,
Who came to curse, and stayed to bless."

214.

"No, not at all," the other said;
"But, to assuage your wonder, know—
That while I praise these men of God,
I think them ministers of woe

215.

"To our fair country. For the more
Their lovely lives and works combine
To glorify a ritual creed,
The more the Romish nets entwine

216.

"Around the vitals of our land:
And there, my friends, 'aye, there's the rub,'—
Who makes men slaves to make them good,
Casts devils out by Beelzebub."

217.

Said Sullivan, "And when all's done,
The worst of devils still will lurk
In those who rest on ritual rags,
Instead of on the 'finished work.'"

218.

"But see, 'tis half an hour and more
Before the Meeting will take place;
Pray give us, Sir, some other types."
"A bad one next," said Mr. Grace—

219.

"The *Tawdry, Tarnished, Female Mind*.
A woman, full of London life,
Has sudden awkward fears of Hell;
As Protestant sees nought but strife

220.

"'Twixt pleasant things and saving things,
While that dear kindly church of Rome,
With a few penances and fasts,
Will spare her joys yet wheel her home

221.

"To Paradise in an easy chair—
Especially if she is rich,—
Those blessed Dispensations too !
So down she falls into the ditch.

222.

"And, as she rolls in scented mud,
Unless her soul is all beguiled
She finds that Belial and the Lord
Can nowhere be quite reconciled."

223.

Said I, "The Evil One, I fear,
On London ladies chiefly acts ;
Their life all scandal, balls, and dress,—
According to good books and tracts."

224.

Says Mr. Grace, "Those tract-mongers
Must get their information queer
From various gentlemen in plush,
By means of various pots of beer.

225.

"For, though on the vast London stage
Both bad and good perform their parts,
Most ladies—ladies born and bred—
Have honest minds and kindly hearts.

226.

"And what your idiot scribbler calls
Their vanity and wickedness,
Is but a tribute to the law
Which sets them in exalted place.

227.

" Suppose some rich and noble dame
Forsakes these 'wicked, worldly' ways,
And lives a quiet, hidden life,—
Oh, what a howl the tradesmen raise !

228.

" The very folk that write the tracts—
An ignorant, narrow-minded brood,
Who boast their beggarly steel pens
Ithuriel spears for bad and good.

229.

" 'Tis no such mighty easy task
To live what's called a life of ease—
To live, not as it suits oneself,
But as a thousand others please.

230.

" Some, whose whole being seems to dwell
In fashion's round of give and take,
Endure a harder martyrdom
Than sufferers at the fiery stake.

231.

[sad,

" Strength gone, brain racked, heart sick, soul
All lights from Heaven eclipsed in gloom,
By conscience herded to their task
Yet threatened with eternal doom.

232.

" Small wonder, when such heavy weights
On woman's nerves so hardly press,
If she should grasp the first strong hand
Held out to succour her distress.

233.

"These poor strayed souls have fared so ill
On High Church husks, or Low Church chaff,
They fancy Rome's deceptive stews
To be paternal fatted calf.

234.

"And as our prophet-poet says, ✓
Concerning each man's joy or woe,
'There's nothing either good or bad
But 'tis the thinking makes it so'—

235.

"Thus Rome's cat's-meat proves veal to them;
They go to mass, and go to balls,
They feast and fast, they dress and pray,
They visit friends and hospitals;

236.

"And o'er the whole their priestly guides ✓
A sweet celestial glamour fling;
Conscience is happy—oh, how oft
A conscience is a selfish thing!

237.

"Their hearts rejoice: their husbands' hearts,
Their childrens', are less well content;
Peace chased for ever from the home,
And trust consigned to banishment.

238.

"God help us all! Whoe'er divides—
Whate'er imagined sanction given—
A loving home, his hand disjoins
The closest bond 'twixt earth and Heaven."

239.

"Amen," said I ; but Sullivan
Looked rather troubled and perplexed ;
He liked the hit against the priests,
But pondered o'er a certain text,—

240.

Which did not trouble me so much :
Like Mr. Grace, I cannot make
My Saviour say immoral things,—
There surely must be some mistake.

241.

Christ's gospel of goodwill towards man
Could not be given to divide
Man's family ties : division comes
From false conceit on either side.

242.

But let that pass. Says I, " Pray, Sir,
What system do the priests pursue
To win the usual sort of folk,
With whom they mostly have to do ?"

243.

" Oh, with those *Silly Feeble-minds*,"
Says he,— " as boys a squirrel mob,
So priests hunt down a witless wight,
If avarice sets them on the job.

244

" In vain he springs from bough to bough,
Still grins a face, still thumps a stone ;
He falls ; they get his pretty skin,
By never leaving him alone.

245.

"If sad,—soft comes an English priest :
'Dear son, might I but comfort thee !'
If grave,—a hard Scotch priest steps in,
And proves his creed by A, B, C.

246.

"If gay,—a jovial Irish priest
Makes merry over beads and book :
'How fair and free is Mother Church !'—
But round a corner could you look

247.

"And see that augur in his den,
You would not like him on the whole.
Well, well, they get their victim's cash,
I wish them joy of his sweet soul !

248.

"For oh ! the life he leads with them ;
And oh ! the life he makes them lead—
An endless idiot's tale of sins
To listen to, his whimperings heed,

249.

"Till patience yields to rage ; as one
Taming a rook with gentle terms,
Soon wearies of its dirt and noise
And gives it kicks instead of worms.

250.

"To hear a brand-new pervert's wail,
His witless woe and morbid fuss,
Confessing to his favourite priest,
Would shake the sides of Cerberus.

251.

"Picture a man matured in years,
Perhaps of active business life,
A magistrate or something more,
With lands and houses, children, wife,

252.

"Telling his little secret thoughts,—
The sort of trash some devil flings
Into a mind in careless mood,
Least-talked-of-soonest-mended things!

253.

"The man, as man, we well can lose,
(For, in these ultra-montane days,
A Briton joining hands with Rome
His country, with his creed, betrays);

254.

"His money too is no vast loss,
It chiefly goes to raise the stones
Of gaudy shrines of goddesses,
Or to enamel dead men's bones,

255.

"(Or oft indeed in charity,
For Rome is careful of the poor,
Though on false grounds, and in wrong mode)—
These kinds of loss we can endure.

256.

"But that a man of large estate
His power and influence should throw,
Not into his own country's scale,
But into that of her great foe;

257.

"That his example, words, and bribes,
Should sap the springs of Britain's might,
Should work to make her fleet a jest,
Her army trustless in the fight ;

258.

"While all his honours, wealth, and power,
Are his through Britain's generous laws,
And he (or false or stupid) vows
His deep devotion to her cause—

259.

"This well might sour a patriot's soul,
And lead him from contempt to hate—
But God is over all ; we place
Our country in His hand, and wait."

260.

Said Sullivan, "The Lord will save
All lands which do not bow the knee
To Baal"—"Ah!" said Mr. Grace,
"That sun-god's name suggests to me

261.

"Another type—the *Prying Mind*,—
Which secret paths would fain explore,
And deems that he will learn from Rome
All sorts of strange mysterious lore.

262.

"Christian and Pagan secrets too,
Rome's higher priesthood know full well ;
But wise indeed our friend will grow
From hearing all they choose to tell !

263.

"Just like the rest he finds himself
An Esau, who if not so rash
As sell his birthright for a mess,
Had kept it and eat venison hash."

264.

Said I, "I hope you will not, Sir,
Consider me inquisitive
Beyond the bounds for Christians set—
But is it in your power to give

265.

"Some inkling of those creeds, or rites,
Or things—whatever they may be—
Known only to the higher priests
And guarded under lock and key?"

266.

"Well, by odd chance," said Mr. Grace,
"You ask a man who really knows
A little about matters known
To few who can or will disclose

267.

"Secrets so strange and dangerous,—
Which like barbarian weapons fly,
And spin their sickled blades around,
Cut here a leg, strike there an eye.

268.

"These secrets too no mortal man
To order in his mind can bring,
For everything seems something else
And something else seems everything.

269.

"Whate'er a certain writer means
By 'Asiatic Mystery',
No other phrase so well describes
The tangled webs that underlie—

270.

"The East, its influence on Rome,
The East, its secret mystic creed,
The East, its share in some beliefs
On which most Christians are agreed.

271.

"Yet ere such questions may be solved
Some threshold queries bid us stay—
These secret mystic Eastern creeds,
What, wherefore, whence, and where, are they?

272.

"As I am but a mortal man,
Far be it from me to pretend
To grapple with a theme so vast,
Beginningless and wanting end.

273.

"I'll just remark, that in the book
Ascribed to the Apostle John,
The writer means no metaphor
When speaking of great Babylon.

274.

"For taking Rome in either guise,
In Pagan or in Christian show,
Whichever creed appeared above
The Babylonian lurked below."

275.

"Dear me!" said I, "now how was that?
I thought the Pagan Romans, Sir,
Had plenty idols of their own—
Venus, Apollo, Jupiter,

276.

"And Hercules, and many more;
And, bad as Papists seem to be,
I never heard a doubt before
About their Christianity."

277.

"The fact remains," said Mr. Grace.
"In every age the priestly school
Of every land (the Protestants
Form an exception to the rule),

278.

"Has gulled, or tried to gull, the herd
Of common folk, with pleasant tales
Of some select peculiar faith
Which for the soul alone avails;

279.

"While the safe pupils of the craft
Such notions speedily discharge,
When taught the secret mystic creeds
Owned by the priestly world at large."

280.

"'Tis strange," said I, "that all agree
To sail so happy in one boat:
About religion, commonly,
Each nation claws the other's throat—

281.

"Like old tom-tigers. Surely, Sir,
No creed could ever at one time
Be held alike by all the priests
Of every race and every clime?"

282.

"No, not exactly so," said he ;
"But the main principle's the same—
The worship of Great Nature's power,
In many a phase, by many a name.

283.

"And here indeed one sees the rays
Of one grand schism, which illumine
(Or rather, light with fitful flash)
The deep, scarce penetrable gloom

284.

"Surrounding periods so remote
That nineteen centuries would be,
Struck off the time since then elapsed,
A branch dissevered from a tree.

285.

"A difference of opinion rose,
Which wrapped the world in blood and flame
For ages, which affects all creeds
Essentially, though not in name.

286.

"Two Elementary Principles
Must Nature in itself combine—
The Active and the Passive power,
The Masculine and Feminine. ✓

287.

“Behold the mighty question then,
The cause of all this old-world strife :—
Ought worship chiefly to be paid
✓ To Mr. Nature, or his wife?

288.

“Now, of the two, the purer creed
Is that which takes for God, the Male ;
And most licentiousness is found
Where other notions most prevail.

289.

“The contest waged by Abraham,
Moses, all early Hebrew chiefs,
Was, to prevent their race or tribe
From following Feminine beliefs—

290.

“Or Canaanite, 'tis all the same ;—
The object hid within the ark
Of Hebrew history—a brass snake—
Was but a symbol in the dark

291.

✓ “Of virile life. That mark itself
Which numbers honour as the sign
Of life from death, in times of old
Meant, likewise,—something less divine.

292.

“Where can one rest amidst such themes ?
How guide oneself through such a maze ?
The men who bowed to Ashtaroth
In Canaan, Greeks of earliest days,

293.

"And Greeks of idle Asian strain,
Egyptian Isis worshippers,—
All served the mystic Queen of Heaven,
And strove 'gainst creeds opposed to hers.

294.

"Nay, midst the Jews and Israelites
Large was the sway of that same queen—
Ah! Jonas, never could you guess
What your own Christian name may mean." ✓

295.

"A name I'm fond and proud of, Sir,
My father's name too, Sir," says I;
"From Scripture too—for meaning look
Brown's larger Bible Diction'ry."

296.

"No doubt, no doubt," says he; "perhaps
Old Brown declares the word means 'dove'; ✓
And so indeed it does, because
That bird was type of female love,

297.

"And sacred to the Queen of Heaven:
The word to stranger meaning roams—
But satis.—Have you ever seen
The pictures in the Catacombs—

298.

"Or drawings of them, that's to say?
I'm sure I opened wide my eyes
To see on early Christian tombs
The symbols of mythologies

299.

"And mysteries so peculiar—but
Satis again ;—though nearer home
The 'sculptured stones' invite remark."
Says Sullivan, "That's far from Rome,—

300.

"It's Ireland, Sir, you're meaning ?—sure
The priests make much of the old stones
With crosses on them, though done round
With snakes, trees, calves, swords, axes, bones,

301.

"Etcetera. If near Calvary's cross
Such things were, some Evangelist
Had doubtless told us—but those priests,
Like pigs, on any food subsist."

302.

"And fatten too", said Mr. Grace :
"But let's to ancient Rome return.
Whate'er the Christian creed at first
(And one thing we may partly learn

303.

From the New Testament—it was
An utterly unsettled sect
In rules and views, except that all
Held Jesus Christ as Heaven's elect),

304.

"Whate'er the creed, we shortly see
That mixing processes begin,
And midst stern Hebrew modes of thought
A Gentile influence comes in.

305.

" Comes in and triumphs, and erelong
The Gentiles utterly prevail,
Build a new Church of Jewish stones,
And set the Jews outside the pale.

306.

" Then in good time the priests, of course,
Enlarge the meshes of their net :
Or rather, use two nets—the small
For semi-Jews ; the large, to get,

307.

" In Asia, Egypt, Rome, and Greece,
The countless shoals of Pagan fry,—
Ground-baiting well with plenteous store
Of mystical mythology.

308.

" And when these Gentile fish are caught
They feed them still with ground-bait fare,
And give the other Christian fish
As much of it as well they dare.

309.

" Three versions thus—to speak more plain—
Of Christ's religion then prevailed :
A Judaism subtilised,— ✓
A Paganism closely veiled,— ✓

310.

" And over all a compromise,
Where worships of Male objects vie
With worships of the Queen of Heaven, ✓
Disguised as Mariolatry.

311.

"Unchanged through long, long lapse of years,
Gorged with the world's best blood and brains,
A poisonous triple-headed thing
The Romish reptile Church remains.

312.

"Chameleon-like it shifts its hue,
To trap each silly victim's eye;
But still it wears the black beneath,
The livery of the Living Lie.

313.

"The secret that its rulers keep
To glad the safe initiate's ear,
Is but the mystery that Rome,
However Christian she appear,

314.

"Owns no real Christ nor Father-God.
Now, as of old, her creed consists
In union with the carnal band
Of priestly Pagan-panteists."

315.

A sudden thought occurred to me.
Said I—"If half of this be true—
And begging pardon, Sir, I'd ask
How you, or your informant, knew

316.

"For certain that the higher priests
Were such atrocious infidels—
If half be true, Sir, don't you think
Your blow at Romanism tells

317.

"Against our Christian creed itself?
For what security have we,
Since Rome so long took charge of that,
That scraps of old mythology

318.

"May not be hidden in the creed
Of even Bible-Protestants?"
"Well, if they are," said Mr. Grace,
"The sooner that one disenchant

319.

"Oneself and friends from false beliefs
The better surely;—but, indeed,
I have no mind to break a lance
Against the holy Christian creed,

320.

"Which I would rather call my own,
And love and cherish. But let all
Forbear to talk in braggart strain
About the supernatural

321.

"Appearance, progress, incidents,
Vouchsafed to their own creed alone,
Sent fair and perfect to the world
As 't were a mushroom newly grown,—

322.

"Devoid of every tie that links
To other things each thing on earth,
Save in a thin prophetic band
Fixed to another mushroom birth.

323.

"Not thus the ways of God with man :
Effects spring ever from a cause,
Not through a sudden act divine,
But through creation's steady laws.

324.

"Had Judaism ne'er been framed,
Nor Eastern creeds to modify,
Nor Greco-Alexandrian thought
To yield Platonic subtlety,

325.

"Then e'en the earlier, purer creeds,
As taught by Peter, John, and Paul,
Had ne'er got shape ; there scarce had been
A Christianity at all.

326.

"And thus—more clearly, plainly thus—
Had Pagan waves not left their foam
Of idol-craft o'er all the world,
There ne'er had been a creed of Rome."

327.

"And that, Sir, I can well believe,"
Said Sullivan ; "if Rome is not
Idolatrous, then heathens are
Not heathens, but—I don't know what.

328.

"Next time the priest and me have words
I'll smite his Reverence hip and thigh !
But, Sir, about their secret faith,
I wish you'd kindly tell us—why

329.

"You have no doubt respecting things
Kept always closely under lock?"
Says Grace, "I'm not a Jesuit;
Nor have I hidden in a clock,

330.

"Like the she-freemason of old:
No proof direct have I, indeed,
To bring the rope around their necks,
For murder of the Christian creed;

331.

"But circumstantial evidence,
Enough to satisfy the mind
Of any jury of free men
Not to the prisoner's side inclined.

332.

"Suppose—before that monstrous war
Which Yankee blood and dollars drank,
Had fixed that negro semi-beasts
As men, not beasts, thenceforth should rank—

333.

"Suppose a black had claimed to be,
And acted just as if, a white;
Would he have held that status till
Some court of law had tried his right?

334.

"His shins are curved, his hair is wool,
Jet-black and odorous his skin,—
I fear Judge Lynch will not inquire
With care about his origin.

335.

"E'en thus, no properties of Rome
But have their perfect counterparts ;
Her dress, her ceremonies, feasts,
Adornments, symbols, mystic arts,

336.

"Her tonsured priests, her hermit-saints,
Her penances, confessions, fasts,
Her unctions, relics, rosaries,
Her celibate religious castes,

337.

"Are things adopted without change
From Pagan creeds. One sees them yct
In fashion so identical
Among the Buddhists of Thibet,

338.

"That even Romish mission-priests
Admit the parallel complete—
A fraud of Satan though, of course.
At every little turn we meet

339.

"Some proof of Pagan influence.
Why, not a prelate lifts his hand
To bless, but straight before our eyes
A symbol—which I understand.

340.

"But what, to all who read and think,
Most plainly tells the curious tale,
Is this, Rome's fourfold deity,—
The female single, triple male.

341.

"But softly here : suffice to say,
The great celestial virgin-queen—
The Universal Mother-hood—
Is worshipped as she aye hath been.

342.

"All signs, Assyrian, Syrian, Greek,
Of Egypt, and of Babylon,—
Star, crescent, vesica—yea all,—
Rome's virgin-goddess makes her own."

343.

"One moment, Sir," said I ; "two things
Have popped themselves into my head ;
If I don't ask about them now,
My questions may remain unsaid.

344.

"First place—Are not these signs employed
By ritualists of every sort ?
And secondly—What harm for those
Who know not what the things import ?"

345.

He answered—"Not a Christian church
But some strange symbols will endure ;
And true enough the common saw,
'To pure minds everything is pure.'

346.

"In this the guilt of Rome consists—
She knows what all these symbols mean,
And, with her fulsome tongue in cheek,
Bids pure souls worship things obscene."

347.

"Yes, Sir," said I ; "as if a man
Should dress his sister in the clothes
Of his low wench, and laugh to see
Her ignorant wear of things she loathes.

348.

"Rome being bad, that her high priests
Are bad is easy to infer ;
But are they Pagan-Infidels ?
One must not bear false witness, Sir."

349.

"Not I," said he—"though in this case
A faulty parallel would tell,
Not 'gainst the knavish Roman priest,
But 'gainst the honest infidel.

350.

"Suppose a mountebanking quack
Should advertise a wondrous pill,
Declaring it, with solemn oaths,
A cure for every human ill,

351.

"A thing composed of precious drugs
O'er which a magic power was shed—
What should we argue if we found
The pills were merely common bread ?

352.

"What need for anxious thought to frame
Our judgment on the case?—to wit,
That those who made or knew the pill
Were infidels regarding it.

353.

"So far so good—the negative,
The non-belief, is clearly shown;
Belief in any Pagan creed
Is much less clear, I frankly own.

354.

"The strong persistence of the priests
To spread some Pagan modes of thought,
Rejecting others which appear
As fit to gain the influence sought

355.

"Over the minds and souls of men,—
Our knowledge that in times of old
Rome's hierarchy chose to cast
Her doctrines in a certain mould,—

356.

"The habit of the priestly mind
To love dark, prurient mysteries,—
A few slight indications found
In mediæval records,—these

357.

"Are scarcely evidence perhaps
On which to base a positive.
But even to the viper brood
I greatly would desire to give

358.

"Such credit as may be their due;
And it were kinder to conceive
That, as to *anything*, Rome's priests
Could say in conscience—'I believe.

359.

"Now let us drop the subject, friends.
With all my heart I hope that I
Have neither sinned through want of truth,
Nor erred through want of charity.

360.

"While showing how Rome's subtle power
On many a foolish one may act,
Full well I know her magic spells
Have fatal influence to attract

361.

"The deepest, purest, holiest minds.
No word of scorn have I for those.
They seek for God with all their hearts,
And find Him, we may well suppose.

362.

"To mystic spirits that aspire,
Through self-denials, vigils, prayers,
To join their life to the Great Life,
To cease from earthly thoughts and cares ;

363.

"To them my burden still shall be—
'Why count a Church your spirit's home?
Spirit meets spirit. Is your God
Imprisoned in the Church of Rome!'"

364.

Though versed in Mr. Grace's ways,
I noticed now, with some surprise,
That while he spoke the last few words
The tears were standing in his eyes.

365.

He turned, and walked across the room,
And from the window viewed the street.
Said Sullivan, "Sir, do our friends
Arrive? 'Tis near the time we meet."

366.

Said Mr. Grace, "No prayerful friends
Appear." Then, smiling somewhat grim,
He pointed to a Highland-man—
"Let's make a parable of him.

367.

"Take yon bold swaggerer in a kilt
To polar lands, he'll soon confess
Good body-covering pantaloons
A highly preferable dress.

368.

"But take him to a tropic isle,
Whose weather knows no chilly fits,
The man will strip off every rag—
As far as decency permits.

369.

"Thus with the soul : in common states
A short, bare Calvinistic kilt
May serve its needs, or please its pride ;
But grief, and gloom, and sense of guilt,

370.

"Will send it shivering through the spheres ;
In search of wraps to Rome it hies,
And rests perchance, for there it finds
A store of pious draperies.

371.

"But if, mistrusting churchman's wares,
It goes to God, as friend to friend,
Small need it feels for ritual garb,
In inward warmth it gains its end."

372.

I never knew, nor liked to ask,
If all this parable—or part—
Applied to Mr. Grace himself,
Or to some person near his heart.

373.

I know not that, but this I know—
That though his talk may taste of rue,
He hates no *being* in the world,
While hating *things* he thinks untrue.

PART III

1.

IN pondering o'er the Church of Rome
 One thought I cannot quite dispel :
 Why creeds so hurtful to the rich
 Should suit the poor so fairly well ?

2.

Perhaps, because the wealthy man
 Is commonly a renegade,
 And full of foolish, dangerous zeal
 I've heard that Papists born and bred,

3.

Of ancient name and large estate,
 Are men of honest, moderate mind,
 Who set their Queen above their Pope,
 And live at peace with all mankind.

4

Just so the humble Romanist,
 Unless some meddling priest should raise
 His temper to the boiling point,
 Is kind and civil in his ways.

5.

Aware of this, I neither feared
Nor met much danger, even when
I entered, on my mission-round,
The darkest, dirtiest, Irish den.

6.

One house, however, I confess
I did not like to visit late,
A man might there be snugly killed
And no one know about his fate.

7.

Indeed, not far from that same place,
Two resurrectionists of old
Pursued their trade of strangling boys,
Whose bodies afterwards they sold.

8.

Such narrow stairs with twists and turns,
Such long dark winding passages,—
Such sudden howls from dreadful holes,
That made one's very life-blood freeze!

9.

The first time I was in that house
I really felt a little queer,
Nor dared to visit any room;
Until at length I chanced to hear

10.

A curious grunting sort of noise,—
As if some person meant to sing,
And thought that snorting through his nose
Would serve as well as anything.

11.

Thinks I, they say that music's power
The most unpleasant beast will tame ;
Suppose he *makes* the music though,
Will the effect be just the same ?

12.

I hesitated what to do,
And sought for strength to aid my choice ;
At length I gave the door a tap :
"Come in," exclaimed a cheerful voice.

13.

I found an empty space inside.
Two rooms branched off this kind of hall,
The further rather dark and large :
The nearer one was very small,

14.

With neither table, bed, nor chair ;
Upon the rotten floor was flung
A heap of rags, and in the midst
A poor old tailor sat and sung,

15.

And snipped and patched and stitched away,
So happy in his little shop ;
And quantities of big brown fleas
Danced round him with their hop, hop, hop.

16.

Now—though I know it's vain to state
One's own peculiarities—
If there's one thing I loathe and dread
Beyond all else, that thing is—fleas.

17.

How wondrous their agility !
These insects, when they want to bite,
Go bounding higher through the air
A hundred times than their own height.

18.

Here see the care of Providence :
If larger creatures thus could spring
In due proportion to their size,
'Twould be a very awkward thing.

19.

Where could you live at all in peace—
Unless to some deep cave you fled—
When at each turn a horse or cow
Came plumping down upon your head ?

20.

But no ; in all things nature keeps
A fair proportion in her laws ;
If one thing flies, another leaps ;
One thing has horns, another claws ;

21.

And man, whose claws and teeth are weak,
Makes up the want by having sense :
Thus nothing kills the other out,
And all may thank kind Providence.

22.

But yet I hope it is not wrong
To wish that Providence would please
In that one thing to change its law,
And make an end of ail the fleas.

23.

When first I went on mission work
They bit me more than words can tell,
Now, through good Mr. Grace's help,
I battle with them pretty well,

24.

By means of powder got from herbs,
A peppery stuff that makes one sneeze ;
I sprinkle this upon my clothes
And play old Herod with the fleas.

25.

It therefore cost me little thought
To stay a moment there and chat
Among the tailor's dirty rags :
We talked of this thing and of that—

26.

And, by the bye, he let me see
How, out of all his odds and ends
Of worn-out cloth, he made up coats
With many patches, darns, and mends,

27.

Quite useful for the poorer folk,
Whose humble feelings are not hurt
By wearing variegated clothes—
The tartan of the clan of dirt.

23.

We talked about the state of trade ;
Of customers who used his shop ;
Of politics ;—I'm not the man
To drag religion neck and crop

29.

Into all talk :—at length, says I,
“What sort of neighbours have you got?”—
I pointed to the further room—
“Are they a decent sort of lot?”

30.

He laughed—the tailor was a wag—
Says he, half-whispering through his nose,
“Dacent! Is’t dacency ye mane?
The dogs are dacent bastes by those.”

31.

“But are they safe to go among?”
Says I, quite low; “Now would they rob
A missionary?” “Sir,” says he,
“Them same’s the boys to do that job.”

32.

“Well, well,” says I, and plucked up heart,
“Though ‘bonds and death await me,’ I
Must take example from St. Paul :
So for the present—friend, good-bye.”

33.

Then off I went, and made my way
To that mysterious further room ;
The place was dark, I scarce could see,
So thick was the tobacco fume

34.

Proceeding from the short clay-pipes
Of several savage-looking roughs,
Who sat beside a fire and smoked.
They stared at me between their puffs,

35.

And to my civil "How-dye-do"
Not one word said they, good or bad,
But sat and stared with sullen eyes.
I left them, feeling rather glad

36.

To come no worse off! as I turned
I saw a woman all alone
Crouched on the floor, quite far away,
As if some sorrow of her own

37.

Filled her whole heart, and kept her there,
As solitary in her woe
As if upon a mountain top
Amidst a wilderness of snow.

38.

I went to her and touched her hand;
She raised her face, and looked at me
With a strange frozen sort of look,
Which might have seemed stupidity

39.

But for a ghastly light that glowed
Deep in her eyes. "Poor thing, poor thing,"
I said, "Why do you look so strange?"
She moved not, to my questioning

40.

Made no reply, but turned her gaze
Tow'rds a far corner, where a ray
Fell from a skylight through the gloom
Upon a table: there there lay

41.

A small dead babe, its little face
White as pure wax,—with all around
So foul, its fairness seemed to me
Like a laid lily on the ground.

42.

Its eyes were closed ; not as in sleep,
But in a glad, angelic rest ;
Coarse linen wrapt its body close,
A cup of salt was on its breast.

43.

Its pretty lips were just apart,
As though they sought the bosom rife—
Sweet babe ! no sucker now of milk,
But sucker of the Tree of Life.

44.

And there its haggard mother crouched
With swollen breast, and seemed to bear
Unutterable pangs of soul,
Half deadly rage, and half despair.

45.

A tigress near her murdered cub
Might look so—ah ! the beast, with moans,
Would gape her yellow throat, and howl
Her fury to the desert stones—

46.

This was a woman. She kept still,
And nature sent no genial flood
Of tears, nor voice to ease her grief :
She silent crouched, and dreamed of blood.

47.

What could I do to help? what say
To one in desolation laid
So terrible. I went my way,
And as I went I prayed and prayed.—

48.

Though not, of course, a timorous man,
This business gave me quite a turn,
I felt as if I'd met a ghost,
The woman looked so strange and stern.

49.

And something seemed to spur me on,
And quicker, quicker, grew my pace,
Till spinning round a corner-house
I nearly levelled Mr. Grace.

50.

"Confound it, Sir, take care!" cried he,—
"What, Jonas!—Why such press of sail?
They'll take you for the prophet, man,
Escaping from the sea-sick whale."

51.

I never knew a person yet
Who liked a joke about his name;
Such jesters seem to say—"I'm top,
You're bottom, and you own my claim."

52.

But, morally, the man who jests
Is lower than the man who bears,
Thus (in a figure) I went up,
And Mr. Grace went down, the stairs.

53.

To do him justice, such a speech
Was quite unlike him, really quite ;
Though sometimes bitter in his way
He usually was most polite.

54.

For once he had forgot himself,—
Remembered rather is the phrase,
My rough collision had knocked out
Sparks from an ancient furnace blaze

55.

Now nearly smothered in his soul.
He joined me in my homeward walk,
No more was said about the whale,
We fell into our usual talk.

56.

"Pray, Mr. Grace," said I—our theme
Was the poor mother and dead child—
"How can the beauty cast by death
Upon a corpse, be reconciled

57.

"With what the Scriptures plainly tell—
That spirit's higher far than flesh,—
The absence of the nobler part
Should ruin rather than refresh?"

58.

"First place," said he, "I'm not so sure
That Scripture plainly teaches that,
For the Old Testament throughout
Would seem to contradict it flat.

59.

"Assuredly, the Jews of old
Were nowhere taught to look more high
Than for such blessings as belong
To bodily prosperity.

60.

"Then turn we to the Christian books,
'Tis not less easy to detect
That, while man's soul is much esteemed,
His body meets with great respect.

61.

"The newest doctrine in the faith,
The thought that first pervades the whole,
Is the salvation of the flesh,
Not the salvation of the soul.

62.

"Such notions as your words convey,
Exalting spirit over all,
Are Greek, not Christian, though derived
From certain doctrines of St. Paul ;

63.

"Mixed up, I daresay, in your mind
With doctrines of his early phase,
And jumbled also with ideas
Belonging to yet earlier days."

64.

"I take St. Paul's own view," said I,
"As in his 'First Corinthians' seen,—
'O death, where is thy victory,'—
The fifteenth chapter, Sir, I mean."

65.

"If such is your belief," said he,
"We two are fairly well agreed,
And need not trouble to discuss
The failings of the common creed.

66.

"For, briefly, when we once discern
That this our body is the rind,
The mere material outward husk,
Wherein a deathless germ's confined—

67.

"The mere material outward frame,
Through which soul meets material things,
While deep in soul the spirit dwells,—
Then all our being victory sings,

68.

"O'er Death, which can but seize a husk,
O'er Grave, which helps that husk's decay,
While at God's hour our sacred germ
Blooms fair in Heaven's eternal day."

69.

"I partly catch your meaning, Sir,"
Said I; "but turn it all I can,
I find the problem yet unsolved
With which this colloquy began—

70.

"How death, which from the body steals
Its soul, its spirit, and its germ,
Should make it thus seem beautiful,
Till wasted by the hungry worm?"

71.

He looked at me, and cleared his throat,
And slow drew off his left-hand glove.
"Jonas," said he, "the parable
Shall give your intellect a shove.

72.

"Behold this object—what is it ?
'A dog-skin glove,' of course you say,
'And plenty like it in our shop—
Though looking much more neat and gay.'

73.

"Why looks this worse ? You straight reply,
'Your hand has forced it out of shape ;
Remark that monstrous knuckle-bulge,
Observe the wrist-band's ugly gape—

74.

" 'And yet it was a pretty glove !'
Well, would you have it as before ?
Remove it from my hurtful hand,
And smooth it into shape once more.

75.

"The body is an earthly thing,
Mere matter more or less refined,
Like stones or metals, and like them
Has beauty of a certain kind.

76.

"The stronger soul that dwells within
Moulds the weak body as it will,
Most oft deforms. Remove the soul,
The body then, all calm and still,

77.

"Becomes a statue, and resumes
Whatever glory it possessed
Before the unquiet inmate came
That robbed it of its perfect rest."

78.

"Dear, dear!" said I, "I often wish—
Excuse an egotistic speech—
My mind was of a lower type,
Not always struggling so to reach

79.

"Down to the very roots of things.
Strong thought on nought half split's one's
Like strong tobacco, if you smoke [head—
Before your stomach's breakfasted.

80.

"Now, Sir,—resembling Tamar's twins,
Two questions travail in my brain,—
One shall be marked with scarlet thread
And pushed like Zarah back again :

81.

"Here's Pharez,—If by means of death
A man's true beauty is increased,
Why does not death at all improve
The handsomeness of any beast ?

82.

"One does not see much holy calm
Adorning a dead horse or dog,
However beautiful in life,
In death it lies an ugly log."

83.

Says Mr. Grace—"Your twins, I doubt,
Will prove to me a pair of Cains :
Perhaps to fight them both at once
May pay me better for my pains,

84.

"As possibly one stone may kill
Both ruffians, while to bear the brunt
Of a long fight is heavy work—
Bring Zarah also to the front !"

85.

He spoke quite seriously, but in
His face some nooks and corners smiled :
"I'm quite agreeable, Sir," said I ;
"So here's my other little child :—

86.

"If parting with the mind and soul
Improves a body, as we see,
The less of them he has in life
The handsomer a man should be :

87.

"But, far from that, a clever man—
As every person will admit—
Looks better than a stupid dunce :
Well, Sir, what is the cause of it ?"

88.

Said he—"About such things as these
No man can know, he can but guess.
Remember, if I say my say
Without reserve or doubtfulness,

89.

"'Tis only for convenience sake.
I use assertion as a peg
To hang my fancies on meanwhile ;
No question would I wish to beg.

90.

"Three elements exist in aught
That lives and moves beneath this sky :
Material form, pure intellect,
And soul or sensibility.

91.

"But great indeed the difference
As to the virtue and extent,
In one or other living thing,
Of one or other element.

92.

"So noble is the form of man
That, when through death 'tis left alone,
A fair unblemished corpse displays
A majesty before unshown.

93.

"Vast is its loss in what departs,
But what continues gains some worth ;
The spirit's beauty fled, more clear
The body's beauty then shines forth.

94.

"Not thus with beast-forms ; life extinct
The body's loss can know no gain ;
For, movement gone, such lower forms
In naked poverty remain.

95.

"There's a fine argument for him
Who that Darwinian doctrine loathes
Which makes man nought but bettered beast,
Distinguished chiefly by his clothes !

96.

"For my own part I little care
Who my primeval sire might be,—
An apple-eating Adamite,
Or a gorilla up a tree."

97.

"Nor should I care at all," said I,
"As far as this myself concerns :
One can't, however, quite forget
That a great Christian doctrine turns

98.

"On Adam and the apple, Sir,
And on his wife, and on her fall ;
This—' As in Adam all men die,
So in,' etcetera—see St. Paul."

99.

Said he—"Yet on the other view
The doctrine equally would suit :
Thus—' In the Ape shall all men die'
That is—in living as the brute."

100.

"Nay Sir," said I, "that change upsets
Whole rows of doctrines, and it shocks
Received beliefs : we may be *broad*,
But must not be unorthodox."

101.

He laughed, and said—" 'Tis hard to tell
Where 'daxies' may begin or end :
Why you yourself, I greatly fear,
Are far from orthodox, my friend.

102.

" Your fancy, Jonas, for St. Paul
Has led you terribly astray,
About celestial bodies, germs,
And so forth : hear what Bishops say—

103.

" (I read it in the ' Times,' myself,
December, Eighteen-seventy-four—
'T was in a ' Charge,' I think—) well, there
I find a Bishop much deplore

104.

✓ " The heathen wickedness of some
In burning bodies after death,
Instead of leaving them to rot
According to the Christian faith.

105.

" By which same faith we ought to see,
That when the Judgment trumpets sound,
The buried bits of every man
Come rushing, flying, hopping round,

106.

" And somehow stick, and form a frame
Which Holy Church had once baptized ;
While any corpse on purpose burnt
Would not at all be recognized.

107.

"A miracle's a miracle,
But reason's voice must yet be heard ;
To say that God could build a man
From ashes would be too absurd !

108.

"And yet I wish it were more clear
What happens when a tiger, say,
Devours your leg ; does it come back
All right upon the Judgment day ?

109.

"Or if a cannibal should eat
Your flesh, and then converted be,
And buried Christian-like at last ;
Would both rise up ? or you ? or he ?

110.

"Or—counting stomachs graves—suppose
You lost a limb by *fire*, I'd beg
To ask in that case—Would you dwell
In Heaven for aye without your leg ?

111.

"Or should you fall into the flames,
Or slip into a reeking vat,
And your whole corpse get roast or boiled
Impromptu fashion—how of that ?

112.

"What pluck a man must needs possess
As member of the fire-brigade !
'To risk a soul to save folk's lives
Should make a body quite afraid.

113.

“And when the spread of ritual power
Obedience to the Church compels,
Brave Captain — will have to choose
His firemen from the infidels.”

114.

“Dear Sir”, said I, “no man could teach
Such stuff as that, for very shame ;—
That limbs come flying through the air
To form the Resurrection frame !

115.

“And as for your facetious case
About the fireman roast or stewed,
Who'd dare to say that God would blight
A man for simply doing good ?”

116.

“As for the first”, said he, “just note
In ‘Doomsday’, by that best of men
George Herbert, such a phrase as this,
Each ‘member jogs the other’. Then

117.

“As for the second, your Low Church
Has just such doctrine of its own :
Consider now the case of those
Who, when the ‘Birkenhead’ went down,

118.

“Saved all the women, but remained
With calm resolve to meet their death ;—
Were all those gallant British men
Converted ? full of saving faith ?

119.

"If not, their souls were doomed, of course,
For ever : while a coward flight
Had gained them time to get 'new birth',
Whence joy in Heaven's eternal light.

120.

"Alas ! what words can speak the ill
By that most wicked doctrine spread—
That God, who loves us while we live,
May hate us after we are dead !"

121.

"Now is not that a little strong ?"
Said I ; " we have no means to tell
The measure of God's hate or love
In sending people's souls to Hell ;

122.

"Perhaps he does it out of love,
In some inexplicable way.
But solid ground we always reach
In heeding what the Scriptures say ;

123.

"And there we plainly see the fate
Of those that brave God's dreadful ire—
As in the 'Sheep and Goats' discourse—
'Depart to everlasting fire.'"

124.

"*Eternal* is the proper word,"
Said Mr. Grace,— "a different thing—
A state enduring for an age,
Not endless. That false colouring

125.

" (With much elsewhere of kindred type)
To the translator's art we owe,
I do not in the least dispute
That wicked souls will enter woe

126.

" At death (I mean the body's death),
Or, rather, *stay* there suffering more.
But nothing in the Bible says
That God will ne'er again restore

127.

" Those erring children—ignorant
More oft than evil. O my friend,
Think for a moment what that means—
To live in woe that cannot end.

128.

" How often on this dreadful theme
The best of men will utter lies,
With no more thought or true intent
Than roughs when execrating eyes !

129.

" The object of a Saviour's work,
You ask ? To save, I know full well.
From what ? From sin, and thus from woe,
For sin is death, and sin is Hell.

130.

" And (setting hows and whys aside)
I hold with you in one respect—
That all the Christian Scriptures speak
Of risk attendant on neglect

131.

"To gain salvation in this world:
And *loss* for ever there may be
For those saved elsewhere afterwards ;
But woe for all eternity

132.

"Is quite another thing indeed—
A figment of old priestly brains
(Like that strange corpse-revival myth)
To fix the minds of men in chains."

133.

"'Tis mighty plain," I here remarked,
"That threats of endless punishment
Might tame the most unruly folk ;
'The burial scheme 's less evident."

134.

"In every priestly act," said he,
"One leading purpose we espy,—
That none should feed in peace without
The Church's finger in his pie.

135.

"And as the body's senses more
Than reason common men control,
The priests raised body to a god
To make it hostage for the soul."

136.

"Excuse me, Sir," said I, "that thought
Is just a little bit obscure."
Said he, "Let's change our subject, lest
We kill where we intend to cure."

137.

"Oh very well," I answered; "then
I'll only venture to remark,
That as regards one question, Sir,
You still have left me in the dark—

138.

" ' Zarah ' I mean "—"The wretch!" said he,
"I thought I'd knocked him on the head.
You ask, 'Why dull men should not have
The same strange beauty as the dead?'

139.

"The beauty of a corpse consists
In absence of disturbing mind.
But soul and intellect impart
True beauties of a different kind,

140.

"Which men of intellect display,
But dull men never can possess,—
Their frame but suffers injury
From the base power of stupidity.

141.

"Just balance Nature most preserves
When forming her most perfect work,
And where her efforts show defect
We find some disproportion lurk,—

142.

"Or through her blame, or through the act
Of man's free-moving restless mind,
The symbols of whose rule appear
In varying impress on mankind.

143.

"And hence, comparing ancient times
With modern, men of ancient race
Show some slight difference of form,
And wondrous difference of face,

144.

"From those with whom our life is led.
Observe the incongruities
When sculptors habit modern men
After the fashion of old Greece.

145.

"Or take some portrait of the day
Of some one of æsthetic mind,—
Poet perhaps, or trading-man
Like his own sugar-loaves refined ;

146.

"The picture's mediæval airs
The studious artist's aim attest ;
Bacon or Borgia pose and garb,—
'Brown, Jones, and Robinson', the rest !

147.

"Or view some costly masquerade,
Where modern fashion apes the guise
Of stately men and beauteous dames
Long dead, but fame of whom ne'er dies.

148.

"In vain costumers ply their art,
In vain Court barbers build perukes,
In vain the aid of paint and patch,—
The modern face the dress rebukes.

149.

"How can a modern harmonise
His visage with an ancient dress ?
The face, quick informality,—
The garb, deliberate stateliness."

150.

"Dear, dear!" said I, "to think of that !
The papers, Sir, I often see,
And though I'm not a worldly man,
To read of balls amuses me.

151.

"When a 'Bal Costumé' is held—
(French words, Sir,—don't they quite refresh ?
The language seems to suit so pat
The world, the devil, and the flesh)—

152.

"When this is held, the newspapers
With unanimity express
High praise of all the people's looks,
As well as of the people's dress.

153.

"And really, Sir, considering
Our English ladies are renowned
For beauty, and our English men
Most manly of all men are found,

154.

"I cannot think or understand—"
"Perhaps not, Jonas," quick said he :
"But without waste of time I'll show
The reason of the mystery.

155.

"Of potent causes that affect
The form or face, to mould or blight—
Disease or violence apart,—
Nerve-force exerts the chiefest might.

156.

"And as time rolls, each chance and change
Brings with it change of nervous strain ;
Thus every generation bears
An impress never borne again.

157.

"More quick, more slow, the impress strikes,
As changes quick or slow take place—
Those who would read a nation's past,
May read it in a nation's face."

158.

"Well then," said I, "I'd like to know
What a philosopher would say
About the sort of people, Sir,
One has to do with every day."

159.

Said he, "I should prefer to take
A broader view of things, and try
How far our English portraiture
Illustrates English history."

160.

"How early, Sir, shall we begin?"
Said I. "But little can we bring,"
He answered, "of a date more old
Than that of the first Tudor king,

161.

"To help us much. But yet methinks
On coin, or brass, or burial-stone,
One sees a type of countenance,
Through centuries, quite unlike our own.

162.

"And, speaking in the general mode,
I think one, on the whole, observes
A grave, calm, firm-fleshed, oval face,
Of strong unwavering lines and curves.

163.

"But pass we to those glorious days
When art from her long slumber woke,
When knowledge re-illumed her lamp,
And link by link Rome's fetters broke :

164.

"When England also feels the thrill,
Strong wafted on the breath of time
Full o'er her distant ocean waves,
Of high things revelling in their prime ;—

165.

"Then her whole range of portraiture,
Of statesman, warrior, noble dame,
Bears constant stamp of fleshly waste
Through heat of intellectual flame.

166.

"Till those resplendent years arrive
When Shakespeare trod this honoured earth,
And round him lived the noblest men
That e'er from England drew their birth.

167.

"Ah! then behold the perfect type,
Where flesh and soul and spirit blend
In measure which the most allows
That glory should in all transcend :

168.

"Long-visaged, strong-chinned, high of nose;
Large-eyed, with gaze stern, sweet, sublime;
Well-bearded, grand of chest and arm;
Browed as if brain to heaven would climb.—

169.

"Ere half a century had flown
A different visage meets the eye,—
Of courtly nobleness in some,
In others of a type less high.

170.

"The Cavalier and Puritan
Two varying types present to view—
The greyhound slim, the mastiff stout;—
Yet both have in them something new :

171.

"In one a selfish vanity,
In one a dry pedantic pride;
Their sires and grandsires o'er them tower
As Shakespeare placed at Milton's side.

172.

"Then worse succeeds, both soul and frame
Degenerate; beauty, strength decay;
Hard, false, dull logic (called 'good sense'),
And brutal hoggishness, bear sway.

173.

"The Cavalier has now become
A strumous fool with goggled eyes,
And bulbous brow, and fat pink lips,
Small chin, and cheeks of lumpish size.

174.

"The Puritan—an atheist now,
Save that he serves a belly-god—
Presents a huge, rough, jowly face,
Topped by a cranium low and broad.

175.

"But ere a deeper depth was plumbed,
(If deeper depth indeed there were),
It pleased the Lord to send a storm
Which cleared the moral atmosphere,—

176.

"The fierce French Revolution. This
(To change the figure) brought to birth,
By devil-wrought Cæsarean act,
Incarnate health for all the earth.

177.

"Then followed war and furious change,
The nations to their centres shook ;—
Behold the features of mankind
Once more a faithful history-book !

178.

"I know not if that storm set loose
New fiends, but since methinks we trace
A new and potent element
Disturbing, injuring oft, the face,—

179.

"An influence on the nerves, displayed
In the inquiring restless glance
And complex feature-lines, that mark
The nineteenth-century countenance."

180.

Said I, "To judge by pictures, Sir,
Our grandfathers when young appeared
Much like young people nowadays,
Except that then they wore no beard."

181.

"Perhaps," said he ; "it takes some time—
Most oft at least—to fix a brand
So plainly on a race that all
Can see the change. And yet the hand

182.

"Of change can never bear on minds
And leave the bodies uncontrolled ;
Our sires' or grandsires' minds were young,
Their sons' or grandsons' minds are old.

183.

"The influence of the camp is seen
In their rough, hasty, manly force
Of speech and thought ; our younger race
Is weaker, slower, and less coarse.

184.

"Contrast the mighty torrent-sweep
Of Byron's fierce impassioned lays,
With the meandering placid flow
Of his deep verse who wears the bays

185.

"In these our times ; or gallant Scott,
Whose rhymes rush on like charge of lance ;
Or Campbell, whose heroic strains
Are battle's trumpets of advance.

186.

"It is not that our moderns lack
All fiery essence in their mind ;
But what belongs to flesh and blood
Appears to them so unrefined,

187.

"That to make simple manifold,
And clear obscure, they take much pains—
The grandsires wrote with all their hearts,
The grandsons write with all their brains."

188.

"Well, Sir," said I, "I did not know
That poets now took pains to be
So modest. Nay, I've heard them charged
With very great indecency."

189.

"I did not speak so much of that,"
Said he, "the primness that I mean
Is, hating common manly force,—
Not, hating things that are obscene.

190.

"For (blameless held some noble names,
And placed on pinnacles above),
The moderns chiefly write with heart
When writing about sensual love."

191.

"How pitiful, dear Sir," said I,
"The wanderings of the carnal man!
With such good subjects all around
To pick and choose among, he can

192.

"Debase himself to play with dirt!
Now is'nt it a *stupid* thing?"
Said he, "I'm not so sure of that;
The subject's always interesting.

193.

"I am not one of those who howl
Whene'er the smallest word is said,
That might not fittingly appear
In books to little children read.

194.

"Nay, truth to tell, I do enjoy
A good strong Rabelaisian shout
To crack my sides withal, the fun
Rough rustics make o'er pipes and stout.

195.

"A man's a man, not incense-smoke
To haunt a church and dread rude gales;
And far too much for wholesome needs
Mock modesty of speech prevails.

196.

"Nor do I shudder over-much
(However little I approve),
When men like Byron sing too free
Of downright, honest, manlike love.

197.

“But what my very soul abhors,
What almost turns my blood to bile,
Is, when some prurient paganist
Stands up, and warbles with a smile

198.

“A sick, putrescent, dulcet lay,—
Like sugared sauce with meat too high,—
To hymn, or hint, the sensuous charms
Of morbid immorality.

199.

“Or when some dog-browed neophyte
Informs the world in terms precise,
That, ‘simple as he stands’, he is
Past-master in Parisian vice ;

200.

“That hells and heavens to him are naught,
Save those that rogues and harlots keep ;
That man—mere beast—should live as beast,
Then mock and curse himself to sleep.

201.

“Or when some ruthless cultured fop
Invites the public to inspect
His scientific skill in love ;
Taking a mistress to dissect,

202.

“As surgeons take a living frog,
And showing how—his note-book near—
Each sigh is registered, each blush
Is tested by thermometer.”

203.

"What villains, Sir!" said I; "I hope
There are not many in the band?
To think how wicked men can be
In this enlightened Christian land!"

204.

He laughed. "Nay, not so fast," said he;
"'Tis not the poets, but the stuff
They write, I grumble at; the men
Themselves, perhaps, are good enough;—

205.

"More vain than vicious, any way."
Said I, "They grossly misbehave—
To my mind. Can such fellows, Sir,
Remember they have souls to save?"

206.

"Excuse me—do you think it right
To read such poems, Mr. Grace?
Pray did you ever meet with them
In any reputable place?"

207.

"Three questions, Jonas!" answered he,
"And two not easy of reply:
'Tis right or wrong to read the things,
According to your reason why.

208.

"To me, through early impulse led
To search into all secret lore
Or good or bad, such books convey
Few facts or thoughts unknown before.

209.

"I view them in a business light,
As surgeons view a foul disease,—
A curious study of its kind,
That may instruct but cannot please.

210.

"The authors likewise I regard
As men to medicine, not detest;
Poor sufferers from a malady;
Not fiends themselves, but fiend-possessed.

211.

"So great the influence that belongs
To those of high poetic power,
Their minds are made the battlefield
For fiends and angels hour by hour.

212.

"And in the poet's youthful prime,
Ere sense and conscience gain right rule,
The devils lead him by the nose,
Appoint him teacher in their school,

213.

"And cram him with the vanity
To differ wheresoe'er he can
From Christ; to teach that love of filth,
Not love of virtue, makes a man.

214.

"Thank God—before whose Spirit's might
The strongest demon-power must bow,—
Full oft such high but sunken souls
Emerge with shuddering from their slough,

215.

"And, like the persecutor Saul,
Work more for good than once for ill.
Alas! their old work yet remains
Earth's curse, No power a past can kill.

216.

"And here's the thought that wrings my heart—
Through tolerance weak the public taste,
Which should repress licentious art,
Is growing shamefully debased.

217.

"For hundredth, thousandth time I say—
And aye will say while life shall dure,—
In painting, sculpture, verse, or prose,
Mere nudity is not impure.

218.

"But what all men of honest soul
Should spit on, rend, break, burn with fire,
Is, art which strives, or subtly tends,
To pander to depraved desire.

219.

"Enough of this. But, by the bye,
One other word before we stop.
You asked me where I found the books
I blame. Where think you?" "In some shop,"

220.

Said I, "remote from the police,
Well hidden in the secret gloom
Of a dark lane." Said he, "I found
The worst one in a drawing-room.

221.

"Wolves in sheep's clothing are these books ;
Got up with taste to please the eye,
Put forth with cunning spidery skill,
They tempt the innocent to buy.

222.

"But if the innocent should read,
And by sad chance should comprehend,
And, turned to thoughts of sin, should sin—
Ah me ! what sorrows will attend

223.

"In this life, or in future life,
On him who wrecked a soul, that he
In calm cold wantonness of heart
Might serve his selfish vanity."

224.

"No man could be so vile," said I,
"If he in God at all believed."
"Not always quite an infidel,"
Said he, "but either much deceived

225.

"By ancient false philosophies
'That worship Beauty as a god,
Despising Truth ; or else ensnared
By cynicism learnt abroad."

226.

"Well, Sir," said I, "the Frenchmen now
Their wickedness aside should fling,
Taught by God's judgments on their land
That sinning is a dangerous thing."

227.

"Nay, Jonas!" answered Mr. Grace,
"Bethink you of Siloam's tower;
If special judgment followed sin,
No nation would be safe one hour.

228.

"Remember, Paris is not France—
Though termed so in a certain sense—
And elsewhere in that land abounds
The highest moral excellence.

229.

"Still, firm and clear the fact remains
That, more than all in evil rife
Stood Paris, shedding venom round
To wither Europe's wholesome life.

230.

"Thence woe to her,—but through no act
Of special judgment,—ruin came
Through the corruption she herself
Had bred and nurtured in her frame.

231.

"E'en thus will be our Britain's fate
Unless she learn to mend her way.
Good morals mean prosperity,
Bad morals ever mean decay."

232.

"Now God forbid that our dear land,"
Said I, "should sink to low estate!
If England fall the world must fall,
Robbed of its best of good and great.

233.

" For Gospel light and Gospel deeds
No country can with ours compare :
For sound domestic morals, Sir,
See England—you 'll find plenty there.

234.

" Not like the godless foreigner
Who counts the marriage tie a jest"—
" Et cetera, et cetera !"
Said Mr. Grace,—" I know the rest.

235.

" Forgive me, Jonas, when I say
That sort of talk is worse than weak.
Each nation has its share of faults,
And England's are not far to seek.

236.

" To set yourself on virtue's throne
And pelt the world with blind abuse,
Is acting Pharisee, without
The Publican for your excuse.

237.

" Our British virtue ! When I see
The hideous, base, commercial greeds,
The proud and ignorant selfishness,
The narrow Philistinian creeds,

238.

" The stolidly material tastes,
The lack of mind to see, e'en guess,
(Far less to form) the beautiful,
The actual love of ugliness,

239.

"The vast, unique vulgarity,
The cold, prim, joyless, worthless worth—
I wonder why the Lord should make
Our race so potent on the earth."

240.

"Stop! stop!" said I: "Stop, stop," said he,
"I merely wished to give a sight
Of the escutcheon's dingy side,
As you would only view the bright."

241.

"And, save for needless waste of time,
It were not difficult to trace
A list of noble gifts of God
Bestowed upon the British race."

242.

"But two will I enumerate
(For reasons we shall soon observe):
The firm, clear, wholesome, moral sense;
The strength and steadiness of nerve."

243.

"The moral sense!" said I, "just now
You almost laughed at me, because
I said that, more than foreigners,
We acted under moral laws."

244.

"Exactly so," said he; "I doubt
If in our *conduct* we surpass
The other European states—
To lump all morals in a mass."

245

"Nay, even when we claimed all sin
'Gainst decency to interdict,
Our principles, I fear, excelled
Our practice. But our rule was strict;

246.

"And that at least preserved our homes
From taint of virgin purity
Through Art of vicious insolence.
To break the rule was to defy

247.

"All honest people, to withdraw
From honest houses, to declare
Yourself an alien from all homes
Where matrons and pure maidens were.

248.

"One cannot make a nation pure
By force of Acts of Parliament;
But high unwritten social law
Much evil can right well prevent

249.

"Can ban all base licentious art,
In picture, poem, novel, play,
Unveil fair Virtue's radiant face,
And rend foul Vice's mask away.

250.

"Thus purify the nation's soul
And raise it from its mire, before
Sin's canker fix beyond remove
And rot it to the very core."

251.

"I hope," said I, "that our great folk
Will move before it grows too late,
And use the influence they possess
To keep the nation's morals straight.

252.

"And—talking, Sir, of Vice's mask—
A famous plan occurs to me,
To make indecency itself
A means of spreading decency.

253.

"Some theatres, in every play,
From Shakespeare to the lowest trash,
Exhibit nearly naked girls,
To draw the little shop-boys' cash.

254.

"Let the Lord Chamberlain have power
To take a sample from each stage,
And shut the creatures up for show
Each in an open wild-beast cage ;

255.

"Then let the boys and ancient rogues
Be herded in to see the sight,
Be forced to view each painted face
And padded leg, in broad daylight,

256.

"Be dragged up to the bars and made
To scan all ugly tricks of dress—
I think these fools would lose their taste
For staring at stage nakedness."

257.

He laughed a little, but I saw
That something in my joke had jarred.
Said he—"You scarce could guess the pain
I feel to see a woman marred.

258.

"And though perhaps we need not care
How much opprobrium we fling
On brazen vice in pride of wealth,
I would not add another sting

259.

"To pierce the humble toiler's heart,
Who makes herself a public show
With shame which oft one's eye can read,
Compelled by want and cruel woe.

260.

"Nay! could we try the beast-cage plan
I would not place the girl therein,
I'd take the greedy Manager
Who makes her loss his means to win ;

261.

"I'd set him near the effigy
Of him who murdered girls in France
To steal their clothes ; and round his cage
All Billingsgate should leap and dance ;

262.

"And as they dance should shout and sing,
While pelting him with rotten eggs,—
'This is the filthy cannibal
That feasts himself on women's legs.'"

263.

A dainty Agag in a cage
With oily curls and scented shirt,
And rings upon its chubby hands—
Oh, what a bull's-eye for the dirt!

264.

Such fun, thought I, 't would be to see
The egg-spots on his superfine!—
Then I remembered that my thought
Was scarcely in the Christian line.

265.

And so, to air my mind a bit
By change of subject—"Sir, you named"
(I now remarked to Mr. Grace)
"Two things for which our land was famed.

266.

"The first, our moral sentiments,—
In which you plainly see disease
Begin to spread and threaten harm:
What was the other, if you please?"

267.

"A sovereign steadiness of nerve,"
Said he, "which once we well might boast,
May claim it still, but much I fear
Our potency is nearly lost.

268.

"The sturdy, stolid, rustic race
Of England's ancient native breed,
Leave their fresh air and toil in mills
To serve the manufacturer's greed.

269.

"The towns grow great, the country pines ;
Bodies are pent, thought runs too free ;
Sense changes to intelligence,
Strength to excitability.

270.

"As trains rush on and steamers haste,
Man's nerve, not coal alone, consumes ;
Much drink and learning turn men mad
And drive them into moral tombs.

271.

"Oh, what a change on our stout land !
For proof of that one symptom serves—
Nerves once were counted women's own,
Now every navvy quotes his 'nerves.'

272.

"In better times, our soldiers fought
For duty's sake and simple pay,
And scorned all ostentatious fuss :
But now they've learnt another way ;

273.

"And after every paltry war
(No odds if few or none be hit)
The medals are served out like grog ;—
If not, the Papers hear of it.

274.

"French polish for old British oak !
Each tradesman now brisks up his soul,
Competes at Shows, and pants to stick
A riband in his button-hole."

275.

"Well, Sir, why not?" said I. "The man
Who makes a pair of pants for fame,
Deserves reward far more than he
Who runs his bayonet through the same."

276.

"Oh, certainly," said Mr. Grace;
"But surely he might be content
To puff his goods in print, not wear
A riband for advertisement."

277.

"For, gloss the matter as you like,
A decoration thus displayed
Could only mean—Behold the man
Who keeps good articles in trade."

278.

"And thus your worthy citizen,
Through misplaced vanity, would fall
As low as he who bears placards
And acts as advertising wall."

279.

"Things honorary, things that pay,
In essence never can accord;
For him who fills his pocket well
His virtue is its own reward."

280.

"Excuse me, Sir," said I, "you show
A sort of narrowness and pride
With which I did not credit you."
"Not so," said he, "whate'er betide,

281.

"Acquit me of such petty thought.
When soul to soul mankind I scan,
I deem each equal to myself
And meet him as my brother man ;

282.

"But in the outward course of life
Due order I would still uphold,
And count a wrong 'gainst abstract right
Worse crime than wrong 'gainst life or gold."

283.

"Worse crime !" said I. "Yea," answered he,
"E'en as the poisoner of springs
Out-sins the taint of one cup—
But let us turn to other things."

284.

Said I, "I daresay, Sir, you're right
As to the growth of silly talk
About one's nerves ; but let me ask,
Before the finish of our walk,

285.

"What other symptoms you perceive
Of nervousness, throughout the mass
Of English folk,—the cause of which,
Perhaps, is burning too much gas?"

286.

"I read them in our books," said he ;
"The want of reticence, the strain ;
The morbid verbal vanity
That springs from softening of the brain ;

287.

"The endless moralising cant
Of spurious manhood, with no zest
Of manhood there,—a female style,—
Thus female authors now write best.

288.

"Oh, would that Britain's angel-guard
Had placed *one* writer in some isle
Apart from man, ere his false lights
Decoyed to wreck our ancient style!

289.

"Our pictures tell the selfsame tale—
Those that can best a tale narrate,—
A sadness sprung from impotence,
Appealingly emasculate.

290.

"Two things our old-young painters dread,
And quell with all their modest might,—
Strong, bold, rich, solid colour-mass,
And cheerful, honest, broad daylight."

291.

Said I, "If people paint so dull
I wonder other people buy.
Just catch me hanging up a thing
That looked like Nature going to cry!"

292.

This made him laugh. "Bravo!" said he,
"I like your jovial British taste.
Yet, speaking as regards myself,
If I were rich enough to waste

293.

"My money in such vanities,
And bound to art of native growth,
These are the very works I'd buy,
And hang them also, nothing loath.

294.

"Oft are they touched with loveliness,
And seem to sing a soft sweet strain
Of grand things past their youthful prime,
Of fair things saddening on the wane."

295.

"Dear Sir," said I, "though I possess
My reasonable share of wits,
Again I fail to understand
How your last declaration fits

296.

"With what you stated previously."
Said he, "In life 'tis seldom good
To venture more than surface-talk;
For either you're not understood—

297.

"Perhaps misunderstood—or else
You needs must spend an hour or more
To put your meaning past a doubt,
And make yourself a dreadful bore.

298.

"Behold me! See, I own two heads—
Old Janus, not Augustus Grace—
At peace or war with British art
According as you view my face.

299.

"The peaceful is the private face,—
Of one belonging to this age,
Exposed to every power that moulds
His fellow-actors on life's stage ;

300.

"Who thinks the thoughts of modern times,
And feels as others of his day ;—
Age-sympathies o'er rebel minds
Assert themselves in kingly way.

301.

"The warlike is the public face,—
Of one belonging to all time
In love of Truth the absolute ;
Who holds Untruth the worst of crime ;

302.

"Who hates all falseness of the age ;
Who, hating his own sympathy
For softnesses and siren-songs,
Lops off his arm, plucks out his eye ;

303.

"Then truncated and semi-dazed
Lifts up his bleeding face to God,
And, strengthened, beats his erring self,
And all false things, with Truth's hard rod.

304.

"'Tis thus, my friend, when some fair show
Of best new painting meets my gaze,
With all its soft voluptuous charms
Of flowers and seas and pearly haze

305.

"I thank it for its tenderness,
Its gentle harmonies of tone,
Its sigh against the chalk-mud style,
Old Philistinian England's own :

306.

"But then a spirit shakes my soul—
'Rise, weakling, from thy hectic dreams,
Go view the old Italian works,
Love art that *is*, not art that *seems*.'"

307.

"My knowledge about pictures, Sir,"
Said I, "is really mighty small ;
Of such as are 'voluptuous'
Of course I don't approve at all ;—

308.

"And when you talk of artists, Sir,
Too fond of that 'voluptuous charm',
Pray do you mean they paint bare flesh
So broadly as to lead to harm?"

309.

How he did laugh. "Dear friend," said he,
"The sort of art I have in view
Is moral mostly in its themes,
Though oft immoral in its hue.

310.

"Nor hold I now within my thought
One individual artist's name,
But fuse as in a crucible
The names of several known to fame ;

311.

"Who differing widely in their styles
In aim and spirit yet agree ;
Or firm or slight, or warm or cold,
The same in general tendency—

312.

"In affectation of that stamp
Which certain highborn ladies bear,
Which seems to say to all the world,
'How sweet I am, how soft, how fair,

313.

"'How far removed in skies serene
From all the vulgar toiling sort,
How graceful when my soul is sad,
How gentle when I make my sport !

314.

"'How very very nice am I !
Beyond humanity refined—
And yet to all the common herd
So condescending and so kind !'

315.

"But affectation is the bane
Of all that art most high should prize ;
Truth sickens near that deadly taint,
And nobleness-in-beauty dies."

316.

"Beauty ?" said I, "a while ago
You surely led me to infer
That they, whate'er might be their faults,
Could paint a pretty woman, Sir ?"

317.

"A *pretty* woman," answered he,
"Is quite within the scope of some,
While others to that point of art
Have neither power nor wish to come.

318.

"But nobleness-in-beauty—nay!
In female form their utmost boast
Is, pink and pulpy round of flesh,
Or skin-and-bony square of ghost.

319.

"Of fantasies with which the fiend
Our island-art has lately blest,
That craze that lankness is the type
For womanhood, I most detest.

320.

"No weasel slim to slip through holes
Is woman in God's primal plan,
But a broad bounteous flexile mould
For framing noble forms of man.

321.

"Such was each queenly Teuton wife,
Alike in peace and warfare great,
With grand blue eyes and vast white arms,
A prophetess, a warrior's mate.

322.

"Small glory will those women win
Who man's right rule would fain contest
In business of the reasoning brain—
Poor third-rate strivers at the best.

323.

"Who, like the fabled dog that dropped
The real to seize the imaged ham,
Would merge the gifts of womanhood
In grasping at mere manhood's sham.

324.

"Whose doctrines, as they win their way,
Will change the comely female sex
To bags of bones with shattered nerves,
Concave where nature meant convex.

325.

"Now Heaven subvert such apish pride,
Content all beauty to efface!
Apish—yea murderous, thus is slain
The Motherhood of man's whole race."

326.

I hardly followed him I own,
But said—as something one must say—
"I heard a lady-lecturer
On Female Rights and Wrongs one day.

327.

"A nice young lady too she was,
And talked away beyond belief;
The Rights were rubbish, but the Wrongs
Quite drove me to my handkerchief."

328.

"And well they might," said he; "but then
These women contravene all laws
Of nature's order, in their zeal
To advocate their sex's cause.

329.

"Man also suffers many 'wrongs',
Through woman's greediness for dress
And carelessness about his food ;—
Would he (his feelings to express)

330.

"Go creeping into female haunts,
With baby-linen on his arm
And needle in his hand, and voice
Pitched high by way of gaining charm ;

331.

"And prove what help in household ways
His sex could easily accord,
By pawing pots and pans about,
Or dirty clothes—like 'Mr. Ford' ?

332.

"— Or dirty clothes ! no metaphor
Has power to match the odorous wealth
Of certain female public talk
On things concerning public health.

333.

"Nay ! when a woman fain would right
Her sisters' wrongs or raise their state,
Her proper task is work at home
To make men work,—not public prate."

334.

Said I, "It's rather lucky, Sir,
That none of them just now are here ;
They'd treat you like that ancient Greek
Whose dogs mistook him for a deer.

335.

"And though I hate a nasty jade,
All rant and cant and scrape and screw,
I cannot rate the sex as low
As you, Sir, seem inclined to do."

336.

"I, Jonas?—rate them low!" said he,
"Whence could so strange a notion start?
I love and honour womanhood
With all my strength and soul and heart."

337.

"But, e'en as one who took delight
To gaze upon a fountain pure
That mirrored flowers and sun and sky,
Could ne'er be tutored to endure

338.

"That the fair fountain should be made
A village pond and common sink,
A place for ducks and geese to feed,
For hogs to roll and cows to drink,—

339.

"So I, who deem a woman true
The heavenliest thing this world may own;
The purest image of God's life,
The mirror where his love is shown;

340.

"The exquisite ethereal flower
That decks the bareness of the earth,
Whose fragrancy enchants the air,
Whose beauty smiles like angel mirth;

341.

"The pure fair soul, whose tenderness
To heavenly influx sets no bound,
But draws divine afflatus in
And breathes the holy influence round ;

342.

"The seeress, whose clear gaze discerns
The good 'midst bad, the bad 'midst good ;
The sacred type of passive power,
The nourisher, the mother-hood ;—

343.

"So I, who judge of woman thus,
Abhor and scorn and execrate
The idiotic sin that seeks
To drag her from her high estate ;

344.

"To rob the world—the universe—
In robbing her of all the train
Of glorious graces of the soul,
For sake of strengthening her brain ;

345.

"That seeks to wreck her noble form,
Great Mother-Nature's type, and bring
A piteous apish form in place,
An arid, acid, mannish thing."

346.

Here came a pause. At length he said,
"I see we've nearly reached your door,
My way runs yonder—so farewell,—
I trust to look on you once more

347.

"Ere from this city I depart.
What say you—shall we have a walk,
When next you make your mission-round ;
And visit somebody, and talk ?"

348.

"By all means, Sir," said I ; "no plan
Could better suit. With your consent
We'll fix next Saturday, at Four ?"
He shook my hand, and off he went.

PART IV.

1.

I SOMETIMES wonder what folk think
Of me and worthy Mr. Grace,
When side by side we stump along,
So different in form and face ;

2.

So different in dress besides,
For though his clothes are seldom new,
They somehow make mine sing quite small,
Though black and fresh, and shiny too.

3.

His garments hang, or wrap him round
Quite kindly, be they thin or thick ;
Mine stand like wooden things aloof,
Or else like sticking-plaster stick.

4.

My eyes are hazel, dark my hair,
Teeth white, expression good ; I feel
That, for a person of my size,
I am by no means ungenteel.

5.

His face is wan, his eyes are sad,
With passing gleams of fiery pride—
Pride tamed by illness,—he is like
A lion with a sick inside. ✓

6.

Yet, though his years may double mine,
And his wild locks are tinged with grey,
His figure bent, his freshness gone,
While I am active, straight, and gay,

7.

Not for a moment can I think
That passers-by desire to scan
My looks like those of Mr. Grace,
Or take me for the better man.

8.

Now what may be the cause of this
(For so it is beyond a doubt)?
I never cared to ask his help
To twist the matter's meaning out.

9.

He is a *gentleman*, I know;
But scarcely will that key unlock
The puzzle-box,—whate'er he is,
I too am of a decent stock.

10.

My folk have farmed their own small farm
Two hundred years, or even more,
And lived upon the best of food—
For never want came nigh our door.

11.

My blood is stuffed as thick as his
With beef and beer and best white bread ;
No servitors are we,—I think
I fairly meet him on that head.

12.

And as to manners—what they call
'The habit of Society',—
In merely walking down a street
That test can hardly much apply.

13.

But yet I somehow always find
That all poor people have the plan
At once to treat me as their mate,
But Mr. Grace as gentleman.

14.

Yet I'm well educated too :
No low expressions pass my lips,
And when I choose to speak my best
My grammar makes no awkward trips.

15.

No, it's not that ! but here it is—
I found it in my history-books—
Our British population springs
From tribes of very various looks.

16.

And in a pamphlet once I saw
The pictures of all sorts of 'types'
Of ancient men with bullet heads,
And ancient men with beaks like snipes ;

17.

And others that I scarce observed—
Not being in my usual line—
Until I stumbled on a type
Exceedingly resembling mine.

18.

A specimen of the little folk
Who lived in caves and used stone spears
And fed on rein-deer; whom the Celts
Supplanted after course of years,

19.

And hunted into corner-lands,
Where their descendants yet remain,
As short dark English, Irish, Scotch,—
Though chiefly as the Basques of Spain.

20.

Now what occurs to me is this,—
That many more than one can know
Have Basquish blood within their veins;
A mixture which is apt to show

21.

In small-boned insignificance:
Henceforth if anyone should ask,
'Why are you held so cheap?' I'll say—
'I'm nothing but a plaguey Basque.'

22.

But quite a different ancestry
Belongs, I think, to Mr. Grace:
I marked his features in the sketch
Of the old Scandinavian face.

23.

Hence, though the man himself be tame,
His blood has in it something wild,
And fierce, and violent, and grim,
That never can be reconciled

24.

With common quiet daily life.
Thus he inspires a secret awe,
As having deep within his soul
A dangerous half-chained scorn of law,

25.

And love of force. His hands are those
To wield an axe or work an oar,
His features bear ancestral signs
Of sea-storms braved off many a shore.

26.

O dear! it almost makes me laugh
To talk such queer romantic stuff—
If my good friend could overhear
I'm sure that *he* would laugh enough!

27.

// And yet he works away, I know,
In rubbish-heaps and muddy caves,
And digs most curious fancies out
From tumuli and dead men's graves.

28.

I heard him thus address a man—
Who sought, with tears, to find the cause
Impelling certain Scottish shires
To set at nought all moral laws,

29.

And, spite of ministers and schools,
To keep the population fed
With twenty illegitimates ✓
In every hundred infants bred—

30.

"Dear Sir," said he, "as certainly
As Wales produces many a Jones,
So Scotland swarms with bastard babes ✓
Wherever there are 'Sculptured Stones'."

31.

His hearer snarled a little snarl :
No crotchet of his own was hit,
But pinchy-pious people dread
Whatever smacks of worldly wit.

32.

"Indeed ! I wont dispute your word ;
But to Argyleshire go"—said he—
"There 'Sculptured Stones' abound, likewise
Propriety and purity."

33.

"Excuse me, pray," said Mr. Grace,
"But at your leisure take a look
At various maps and treatises
Within the 'Spalding Club's' great book

34.

"On these same stones : it seems to me—
First, that North-east Scotch specimens own
Strange mystic Oriental signs,
Belonging to themselves alone

35.

" In plenitude ; though, Secondly,
A few like symbols may be spied
In sculptures scattered up and down
Through the old kingdom called Strath Clyde;

36.

" While, Thirdly, in the northern West,
And otherwise throughout the land,
The 'Sculptured Stones' show Christian signs,
Or signs that all may understand.

37.

" Now, by a strange coincidence,
My first and second districts bear
Rich crops of illegitimates,
While scanty crops are grown elsewhere.

38.

" From which I argue, that the men
Of those two tracts are near in race ;
And likewise—as the northern formed
The Pictish nation's dwelling-place,

39.

" While in the southern, Cymric Celts
Lived quite apart from Celtic Gaels—
That Picts were Cymric,—not like Scots
Akin to Ireland, but to Wales.

40.

" Thus their descendants' wicked ways
No special wickedness denote,
But come of tribal marriage rules
Surviving still from times remote.

41.

"What think you, Sir?" (Thus spoke my friend
Quite seriously, he meant nogibes).

"Stuff!" said his hearer, "next you'll make
Religion a mere thing of tribes."

42.

"And so I do!" said Mr. Grace
(The other's tone a saint might gall);
"Religion such as your's, at least,
By 'Huckster' out of 'Cannibal'!"—

43.

O dear! I've nearly lost the end
Of my small story's skein of thread;
I ought to talk about a walk—
Heaven gave us feet, as well as head.

44.

Behold then Mr. Grace and me,
As patiently we make our way
Along a strange old wandering street
Hemmed in by houses tall and grey,

45.

Whose plain square windows pierce the walls
Like port-holes ranged in many a row;—
Poor people fill the rooms above,
While tradesmen use the rooms below.

46.

And as you struggle down the road
A jumbled crowd your path disputes—
Thieves, drunken Irish, clergymen,
Policemen, lawyers, prostitutes.

47.

And all the reek and drabby dirt
Is brightened up with flaring reds—
Through soldiers' coats, and childrens' hurts,
And women's bare and uncombed heads.

48.

Foul fish-carts smeared with blood and scales,
And baskets heaped with haddocks dried,
Tobacco, whisky, nameless filths,
Infect the air on every side.

49.

And o'er the whole a solemn church
Uplifts its old majestic crowns—
Like a grave surgeon, glass in eye,
Who o'er a curious subject frowns.

50.

Said Mr. Grace, as people pressed
Against his nose their horrid taints,—
“More pleasant Hell with cleanly fiends,
Than Paradise with filthy saints!”

51.

“But, Sir”, I said, “if you and I
Were forced to pump from yonder well
And carry up a hundred steps
Each drop of water, who can tell

52.

“How we might seem to nose polite?
See how those women push and thump,
Or weary wait, no handy place
To fill their jugs from but that pump.”

53.

"One pump for all the lot!" said he;
"Poor things, they have enough to do.
A Provost worth his salt would soon
Provide another pump or two.

54.

"In foreign towns, at every turn
A basined fountain spouts and swells;
The meanest foreign hamlet boasts
Its founts and pumps and public wells.

55.

"But in this middle-classy land,
Our civic rulers—Christian wags!
Keep bread and fish for broadcloth coats,
But stones and scorpions for old rags.

56.

"Yet Nemesis will have her say—
Each town of ours is one vast tomb
For poor men's joys, but in return
We languish in that heavy gloom."

57.

Said I, "I thought that nowadays
Philanthropy was quite in vogue,—
Baths, markets, lodging-houses, parks,
Jails to reform, not hurt, the rogue."

58.

"Oh yes", said he, "philanthropy,
In these fine days of pride in pelf,
Means less the general love of man,
Than love of one man—namely self.

59.

"Our pompous offerings to the poor
Are little worth, through one neglect—
We give at best cold kindliness,
They ask for absolute respect.

60.

"And half our efforts are designed
To keep poor people out of sight ;
And half our benefits, to serve
Our fancy more than their delight.

61.

"Oh ! that dull London could but see,
What every German city sees,
Gay, well-benched gardens everywhere,
With tables under spreading trees ;

62.

"And happy people grouped about,
With wine and coffee, pipes and beer,—
Men, women, children, poor and rich,
All courteous mirth and quiet cheer.

63.

"Yet no republicans are these,
No levellers full of rage and hate,
Each class maintains its rightful place
As God and law have fixed its state.

64.

"Each meets the other man to man—
At par within, whate'er outside—
From poor no cringing abjectness,
From rich no supercilious pride.

65.

"O Germany, thou great of heart !
Thou truest learner in Truth's school !
Thou seekest that which is most fit,—
Behold thyself most fit to rule !"

66.

"Rule *Frenchmen*, meant you, Sir?" said I,
"For that one need not make a fuss :
But *Britons* never shall be slaves—
Just let them try their hand at us!"

67.

"Now Heaven avert it ! till we learn,"
Said he, "to order things aright ;
Or into one confederate state
All English-speaking men unite."

68.

"Join with the Yankees, Sir? indeed!"
Said I—I took him up post-haste—
"To swamp our Sovereign and our Peers
To suit their whims, don't suit my taste."

69.

"And as to all you tell me, Sir,
About our treatment of the poor,
Pray give an instance, if you please,
Of any fault that one might cure"

70.

"In any simple, plain, quick way.
For as to words and looks that tend
To breed dislike 'twixt poor and rich,
God's grace alone such things can mend."

N

71.

I felt and spoke a little cross,
But calmly Mr. Grace replied—
“Confederation might be formed
By compromise on either side.

72.

“And nought that I can see forbids
That holders of high place should stand
Exalted in these island realms,
And honoured in the Empire land.

73.

“And in this marriage of great States
Much benefit for both might be ;
For us, strength, progress, youthful spring,
For them, weight, culture, dignity.

74.

“Whate’er *their* view, each British man
To help such union should rejoice,
Ere mighty powers in pride of growth
Shall make it for us ‘Hobson’s choice’.”

75.

“Well, Sir,” said I, “to think so small
Of Britain I could ne’er consent.”
“Nor I,” responded Mr. Grace,
“If I could double her extent.

76.

“But let us pass to lighter themes :
One sample I will now submit,
To show our treatment of the poor,
And scorn for what is right and fit.

77.

"Some toiler in vast London town,
In summer when the nights are fair,
Desires to rest her weary limbs
And breathe a breath of evening air :

78.

"Where may she seek for that small joy ?
Enclosures locked, or dangerous dark
For modesty, no seat remains
Save some outside St. James's Park.

79.

"Oft have I strolled in summer dusk
Along that walk, and watched the quest,
The cunning shifts, the sudden swoops,
Of people longing for a rest.

80.

"Oft have I seen some sullen rough
O'er a whole bench extend his leg,
While women, children, weak old men,
In vain for room inquire or beg.

81.

"Now what would be the course pursued
By those who took an honest care
For humble people ? First, to place
New seats in numbers here and there ;

82.

"And secondly, to make each bench
Smooth, easy, free from points and knobs,
With arms dividing seat from seat,
To baffle selfish lounging snobs.

83.

"What do our rulers? Nought but this—
Whene'er a bench becomes too old,
They place, instead, a metal form,
A backless gridiron hard and cold.

84.

"Would that themselves were bound to use
Those seats, and say with what vast sums
They hope to warm the nation's purse
By freezing needy lieges—Comes

85.

"Such conduct from mere apathy?
Or from a barbarous ignorance
Of fitness in regard to things?—
Just for a moment let us glance

86.

"At military dress. Observe
A common German sentinel
Pace up and down in summer's heat;
It needs no conjuror to tell

87.

"That his blue coat of easy play,
His helmet with its shiny glaze,
His holland trowsers,—all are good
'To battle with the sunbeam blaze.

88.

"Now mark your British sentry, set
To stifle in some London street,
In burning red from neck to waist,
In baking black from waist to feet;

89.

"With shadeless eyes and cumbered head,
And tight-built tunic; as you scan
Your brain grows dazed, you seem to see
A salamander, not a man.

90.

"The ruddiness of coat we grant,
As Britain's own peculiar show,—
But though our lads must blaze above,
They need not 'carry coals' below.

91.

"Once on a time our heroes' limbs
Appeared in brilliant white array,
But doctors blamed the pipe-clayed garb,
So snowy trowsers went their way.

92.

"And then they tried a pale sky-blue,
And then they tried—I don't know what;
Then, hopeless, fixed on winter black,
What served for cold might serve for hot."

93.

"Why not afford them holland pants,"
Said I, "like those the Germans wear?
And why not give them epaulettes?
Their shoulders look so plain and bare."

94.

"You're right," said he, "a scarlet mass
Demands much breaking up, no doubt;
Besides, our British shoulder-blades
Require a little squaring-out.

95.

"And though to epaulettes of size
All kind of inconvenience clings,
High shoulder-straps might serve instead,
Or flexible old-fashioned 'wings'."

96.

"Your pardon, Mr. Grace," said I,
"For stopping you ! It's five o'clock,
And here's the house that holds, within,
A future member of my flock,—

97.

"Old James Carmichael, whom I now
On special business have to see.
We're sure enough to find him in,
For 'tis their usual hour for tea.

98.

"A tidy fellow (so it's said),
No sights or smells will here offend—
Allow me, Sir,—I'll show the way :"
"All right !" replied my worthy friend.

99.

The house was one of moderate height,
As houses in that district go,
We soon arrived at James's door,
And asked if he were in, or no.

100.

"Walk in, walk in"—exclaimed a voice ;
We entered, and beheld advance
A little brown mulatto man,
Of grave, though smiling, countenance.

101.

His manners were of lofty sort,
He dealt in words extremely fine,—
He made one think of funerals,
And people handing cakes and wine.

102.

"Be seated, gentlemen," said he,
And offered each of us a chair;
"You're berry welcome, berry much."
Said I, "We've clambered up your stair

103.

"On business bound, although likewise
In hopes to have a pleasant chat.
I come from Mr. Sullivan
With this"—a parcel small and flat

104.

Accompanied my words. It held
A charitable monthly dole
Allowed to certain poor old men,
To furnish them with food and coal.

105.

One's apt to find—I can't guess why—
That giving any party cash
Before another party, seems
With all three parties' tastes to clash.

106.

James nodded thanks, and looked away;
I looked away; and Mr. Grace,
To ease his fidget, left his chair
And near the window took his place;—

107.

Looked out, then to Carmichael said,
"How fine this is! I little knew
What scenes you gazed on every day;
I envy you your splendid view!"

108.

"Yes, Sir," said James, "de Lord be praised,
I hab a 'goodly heritage',
'Wid worldly bliss my cup runs o'er';
I'm berry actibe for my age,

109.

"And, when de elements permit,
I ebery morning take a stroll
Among de big romantic rocks,
And see de little children roll

110.

"From top to bottom of de banks,
Among de pretty lambs and sheep;
And eberyting do smell so nice!
And all de birds sing cheepy cheep!"

111.

We laughed, did Mr. Grace and I,
To hear him talk that pleasant way:
Then said the former—"Well, I see
That even if at home you stay

112.

"You 're furnished with a famous store
Of entertainment. I'll be bound,
When things appear a little flat
You 'square' yourself by looking round!"

113.

He pointed to the wainscot walls,
All pasted o'er with foreign views,
Beasts, birds, etcetera, displayed
On pages from the 'London News'.

114.

"Ha ! ha !" laughed Jemmy, "dat is grand !
I stick de pictures up for dat,—
To keep in someting dat is round,
And keep out someting dat is flat.

115.

"Dey help de good in dat great fight
Where good wid ebil butts and tugs,—
Dey keep de World of Knowledge in,
And from dis room keep out de bugs."

116.

I thought that Mr. Grace and I
Would die with laughing at that joke,
The old man rolled his eyes so odd
And looked so funny as he spoke.

117.

And when we stopped he winked a bit,
Then laughed, and then we laughed all threc;
The only grave one of the lot
The little terrier on his knee—

118.

The very fattest little dog
That ever walked—it never ran,—
Meek, sleek and sly, its native hues,
Just like its master's, black and tan.

119.

"How interesting", said Mr. Grace,
"To see the 'London News' addressed
To double work—to feed man's mind,
And circumvent the insect pest !

120.

"'Twere well if all the British press,
Grave, gay, religious, wise, or smug,
Would make a parable of this
And ostracise the critic-bug ;

121.

"The nauseous nameless wretch that lurks
Where rottenness its love invites,
That preys on fettered victim's blood,
And safe in darkness stinks and bites."

122.

"Ha ha ! ha ha !" responds old James,
With curious clucking chuckling screech.
We talked a while, and Mr. Grace
Made many a quite facetious speech.

123.

"Ha ha !" says James, "dat is de tings
I 'be heard de good ole Sheribb say,
After de ladies leabe de room,
At dinner wid my Lady Ray."

124.

"With Lady Ray ?" said Mr Grace,—
And rose up quickly, discomposed,—
"How strange ! why I—but never mind—
Some morning, friend, if you 're disposed

125.

"To have a chat about old days,
I'll come again. Yes?—be it so.
Goodbye, then : Jonas and his watch
Inform me it is time to go."

126.

'Tis strange good Mr. Grace's skill
The very smallest move to spy ;
So quiet as he seems, he'd note
A young mosquito wink its eye.

127.

For certainly no man but he
Would ever catch a little peep
At a large silver dial-plate
Down in a pocket wide and deep.

128.

Mine is not like a hunting-watch
That startles with a sudden click,
But quite the thing to use in church,
Or when one's visiting the sick :

129.

A first-rate watch of English make,
Which in a raffle once I won,—
Before my *change*, all gambling now
Of course most carefully I shun.

130.

Says Mr. Grace, as down the stairs
'Together we pursued our course,'
"I wonder why that poor old man
Was left so much without resource.

131.

"A kindly soul like Lady Ray—
Besides what other friends he had—
Some pension surely had bestowed,
Unless his conduct was too bad."

132.

"Well, Sir," said I, "to tell the truth,
He got into an awkward scrape—
Not drunkenness, the usual snare,
His trespass took a graver shape.

133.

"Some dozen years with Lady Ray
He served as butler, and his wife
Was housekeeper, till suddenly
Through accident she lost her life.

134.

"Poor Jemmy nearly lost his wits,
Such grief and misery ensued ;
He left his place, and lived awhile
In melancholy solitude.

135.

"And then at length he went away
And ventured on new marriage vows ;
But, sad to say, his second mate
Was sister to his former spouse.

136.

"She too is dead, and, as I'm told,
Repented of her grievous sin—"
"Cease, Sir!" said Mr. Grace, and frowned :
And didn't I at once hold in !

137.

"Cease, Sir!" said he, with flaming eyes
That seemed to scorch my very soul,
"Cease this ungodly senseless talk,
Ere my strong anger lose control.

138.

"To make that sin which God makes none,
Is Satan in an angel's dress;
And outraged Nature scorns the fool
That shrieks out No, where she says Yes."

139.

"Dear Mr. Grace," said I, quite soft,
"I'm sure you very soon will own
That it is neither right nor kind
To speak to me in such a tone."

140.

His brow relaxed, he gave a sigh
As one who suffers inward pain,
Cast down his eyes and pressed his heart,
And murmured low—"Again! again!"

141.

Then said he,—"Jonas, much I wish
That you should deem me your good friend.
Forgive my petulance, such warmth
Of speech might any man offend.

142.

"But in my heart you struck a chord
That agonises at rude stroke;
Yourself forgot, your words took shape,—
Methought a callous devil spoke;

143.

"A ruthless mocking fiend, compact
Of tyranny and priestly lie,
Pride, selfish narrowness, dull spite,
Unreason, mean stupidity.

144.

"But let this drop ;—set warmth aside,
And let us calmly each show cause
Why change should pass, or should not pass,
On certain British marriage laws.

145.

Said I—"You don't expect from me
The sort of thing a lawyer states
About old Acts and politics ?
I've sometimes glanced at the Debates—"

146.

"Debates!" cried he, "I've heard enough
To chase all slumber from the eye,
To fill the soul with bitterness,
Despairing for Humanity.

147.

"For, as when in a treacherous swamp
Some noble stag is prisoned tight,
Ten thousand gnats around him hum,
And myriad midges plague and bite,—

148.

"So, when the 'Marriage Bill' appears,
At once a swarm of foes upstart
To hack and thrust, and in the press
Each 'puny whipster' plucks up heart

149.

"And wields his toasting-fork, and stabs—
With small effect, but mighty rage,—
As tedious Small-bore Twaddle-tongue,
Or Boanerges Narrow-gauge.

150.

"Strange! whence can this poor question draw
Its power to cause such wealth of hates;
To take good Christians, stern or mild,
And make them fierce avenging Fates?

151.

"I've seen a pious prelate glare
With lurid looks, I've heard him speak,
Like cursèd Dunstan when he seared
The flesh from fair Elgiva's cheek.

152.

"I've heard a grave Lord Chancellor
(A man loved, honoured, wise, and bland,)
Declare that he would rather see
A hostile host within our land,

153.

"Than change this law—O Heaven and Earth!
He'd rather see his country red
With manly gore, the infants slain,
The wives and maids despoiled or dead,—

154.

"He'd rather see all Hell set loose,—
Than, heedless of the priestly groan,
Permit poor widowed Hodge espouse
The sister of his buried Joan!"

155.

A curious way had Mr. Grace
Whene'er unusually impressed,—
He'd shy at his own earnestness,
Then turn his bogie into jest.

156.

But those who thought him sceptical,
Or one prepared to take a part
In mocking really sacred things,—
Indeed they little knew his heart.

157.

"Well, Sir," said I, "the Chancellor
His motive, may-be, partly drew
From wish to save our British homes—
What people call the 'Social View'."

158.

"To save our homes from what?" said he;
"There would not be much left to save
If French or Cossacks entered them,
But ruined heaps to crown a grave."

159.

"To save the *sanctity*," said I,
"That makes a British home complete:
Your wife's dear sisters quite your own,
The friendly kissing when you meet;

160.

"And all so innocent and nice,
As nothing more can ere ensue;—
A change of law would surely prove
Most dang'rous both for them and you."

161.

"Why, what a fellow you must be!"
Said Mr. Grace; "one might have thought
Your cousin, say, might safely dwell
Beneath your roof, but now I'm taught

162.

"That gay Lotharios such as you
No woman's virtue can respect
For sake of pleasing God and man;
Some special law must needs protect.

163.

"Jonas! thy spouse's sisters dear
Now seek thy home without offence:
Were law to change while they were there—
Oh, what would be the consequence!"

164.

"Such nonsense, Sir, you choose to talk!"
Said I; "you know beyond a doubt
That I am still a bachelor,
Nor wife nor sister 'lead about'.

165.

"But just consider, if you please,
Another aspect of the case—
Suppose your wedded wife should die,
Her sister can assume her place,

166.

"And keep the children clean and neat,
And make the servants work in tune,—
As excellent Miss Dowie does
For worthy Dr. Witherspoon."

167.

Said Mr. Grace—"Good Witherspoon
Is ancient as Melchizedec,
And kind Miss Dowie's sixty years
All impropriety might check.

168.

"But if good Witherspoon were young,
And kind Miss Dowie sweet sixteen,
It seems to me her prudent friends
Would scarcely find it quite convene,

169.

"Should that sad widower in his prime,
And that fair maiden, haste away
To some lone cottage in the hills,
To mourn together night and day.

170.

"Now, who of such companionship
Would venture any ill to think,
Were he real brother, and were she
Sister in blood—not lawyer's ink?

171.

"Of hurt or loss for families
A change of law would nought express,—
Save some small jealous fancies more,
And some fraternal kisses less."

172.

"Well, Sir," said I, "the 'Social View'
Is founded, possibly, on sand;
But the 'Religious View' is based
On rock—and there I take my stand."

173.

"Good," answered he, "but first be pleased
The nature of your rock to state—
Hard igneous old Mosaic 'Trap' ?
Or Christianised 'Conglomerate' ?"

174.

Said I—"Deception I abhor;
And this quite frankly I'll admit,
That nothing in the Pentateuch
Can serve my view the smallest bit.

175.

"For, if our version is correct,
'Tis plain, for e'en the densest dunce,
That Jews might wed two sisters, if
They did not wed them both at once.

176.

"So say the Jews themselves, and I
Say with the man who chose to wear
His coat fur out—'The beasts know best
The way to manage their own hair.'"

177.

"Ah yes!" said he, "the beasts accept
God's plan ; but bigots I'm afraid
Despise it, seeing they were not
Consulted when the world was made."

178.

"Well, Sir," said I, "the Jewish 'Trap'
Is naught for me, the rock I meant
Was that firm granite pedestal—
The New, the Christian, Testament.

179.

"And there, by several—by St. Paul,
By Christ himself,—'tis clearly shown
That man and wife in wedlock joined
Become *one body*—blood, flesh, bone.

180.

"Thus every tie of blood you share
With your own mystic spousal 'rib',
From granny with her spectacles
To baby sister in her bib."

181.

"Appalling thought," said Mr. Grace,
"For many a hapless married wight!
But, candidly, there was a time
When I could hardly see daylight

182.

"Through that same argument, which bulks
Portentous to the Christian eye.
But answer me one question now—
You'll see its bearing by and bye.

183.

"What constitutes a marriage, friend?
What makes the union free from flaw?"
"The service in the church," said I;
"Or forms provided by the law."

184.

Said he—"A little more than that,
Unless I read the Scriptures wrong.
But, Jonas, these are awkward themes,
Such difficulties round me throng

185.

"I'd fain dismiss the subject. Yet
I'll something dare in truth's defence:
Acquit me of impure intent,
Or wilful want of reverence.

186.

"When Christ those weighty precepts gave
On which your doctrines mainly ground
(The nineteenth chapter, Gospel first,
Is where the passage may be found),

187.

"What said he (quoting Genesis)?—
That man his parents both should leave,
And to his wife—'bone of his bone,
'Flesh of his flesh'—should thenceforth cleave.

188.

"What says St. Paul (Ephesians—Five)?
Why, there the selfsame words we see,
With reference also to the Church
And a great Christian 'mystery'.

189.

"What says St. Paul? see once again
(Corinthians First, in Chapter Six),
And mark this passage,—he reproveth
The converts who would intermix

190.

"God's works and Belial's, holding fast
By Corinth's special vice,—saith he,
Your bodies are God's holy shrines,
From sensual conduct therefore flee:

191.

“For he who, reckless of all good,
Shall fall into the harlot’s mesh,
Becomes *one body*, he with her,
✓ ‘For two- (’tis writ) shall be one flesh.’

192.

“What sort of man is he, who dares
To mark a parallel so plain,
Yet vows that nought but priestly rites
Can make the mystic one-from-twain !”

193.

Said I—“To tell the honest truth,
I never once observed before
How texts so fit for man and wife
/ Are also fit for man and—more.

194.

“Still, granting this, I fail to see
What argument you hope to clutch”—
Said he, “’Tis little in itself,
But for your bisson bigot much.

195.

“For when your bisson bigot cries
That ruin will our land o’erflood,
If wicked statesmen change the law
Which makes of man and wife one blood,

196.

“And thus permit incestuous sin ;
While now, our happiness and wealth
Are Heaven’s reward for all our care
To keep our country’s soul in health

197.

"In this particular : I say,—
'O hypocrite (if not all blind) !
Consider, first, that we alone,
Of every nation of mankind,

198.

" 'Maintain the law that glads thy heart,
Yet other nations prosper well—
The glorious German empire, now,
Is it delivered quite to Hell ?

199.

" 'Then, passing on, I pray thee mark
The trickery in thy Gospel shop—
To promise God the loaf entire,
And cheat him with a knavish sop !

200.

" 'To buy his favour, you, forsooth,
Pretend obedience free from flaw.
Good if you hoodwink him ; if not,
For mercy's sake enlarge your law !

201.

" 'And give no rest by night or day
To any man of British race,
Until a stringent law is made
That, ere a marriage may take place,

202.

" 'Stern inquisition shall up-rake
The past of bridegroom and of bride,
Shall peer into all hidden nooks,
And then most solemnly decide

203.

“ ‘ The pedigree of every lapse
From virtue it can thus unearth ;
Lest near relations come to wed—
Sin-ties held close as ties through birth.’ ”

204.

O dear, O dear! it made me laugh
To think how people would begin—
Just as of Pa and Ma ‘in-law’—
To talk of Pa and Ma ‘in-sin’.

205.

Said I—and told him why I laughed
(I like a nice good-humoured joke)—
“ Excuse me, Sir; your guns, though big,
Shoot less of ball than wind and smoke.

206.

“ Why, surely it is clear enough
To any reasonable man,
That mortals neither could nor would
Work out your inquisition plan.

207.

“ And surely it is likewise clear,
That he would be an utter oaf
Who threw away good wholesome bread
Because it was but half a loaf.”

208.

“ Oh, if you come to policy,”
Said he, “ perhaps you are not wrong
(Though that admits of argument);
I sang a different sort of song,

209.

"Which said not whether it were wise,
Or rash, for priests to slack the chain
That curbs all those obliged to prance
Obedient to the Church's rein—

210.

"And yet, indeed, with all my heart
I warn the Church to heed her way;
The victims of her petulance,
Though quiet now, but bide their day.

211.

"And weak as she may proudly deem
The foes that writhe beneath her power,
Perchance their hate will lend them strength
To crush her in her evil hour.

212.

"All stirring up of wrath should be
By Churches, as by men, eschewed;
The deadly hate of one hurts more,
Than lukewarm love from ten does good."

213.

"Although no Churchman, Sir," said I,
"I hope ill chance may ne'er displace
The English Church. I love her, Sir."
"And so do I," said Mr. Grace.

214.

"And therefore I would have her rest
From torturing with wanton whip
Her law-chained serfs (as vulgar fools
Their dogs), in vaunt of ownership.

215.

"But (to return to whence we came)
About that argument of mine,—
I aim to show the priests forbid
To take the high religious line.

216.

"To put it plainly, thus I speak—
'O bisson bigot, cease your cant.
In sacred law, who bolts a midge
As well might bolt an elephant:

217.

"'And if, in secret, to devour
A Paul-banned maggot you agree,
Forbear the Pharisaic cry,
'Nought common or unclean for me!'

218.

"'Forbear, likewise, to gull the land
With threats of Heaven's avenging rod,
If once it cease to keep intact
Half of a so-called law of God.'

219.

"Oh for a Samson strength to ban
Such liars! I would rather greet
A devil hissing-hot from Hell,
Than a religious hypocrite!"

220.

"Oh hush," said I; "that sort of talk
All Christians must consider wrong."
"I stand rebuked," said Mr. Grace,
"My language was a trifle strong."

221.

"Yes really, Sir"—continued I—
" 'Twas but a little while ago
You blamed a bishop's angry speech"—
"Friend," answered he, "I'd have you know

222.

"What mighty difference there is
'Twixt vehemence to set men free,
And that thrice-damnèd devil-born,
Enthusiastic tyranny."

223.

"Amen," said I. "Pray tell me, Sir,
"How you interpret, after all,
'Flesh of his flesh'?" "The words," said he,
"Of course are metaphorical—

224.

"Or spiritual (shall we say).
If to be carnally received,
The Romish 'bleeding-wafer' trash
Is just as much to be believed."

225.

"Another word, Sir, please. Some folk
Declare," said I, "that such a change
As let all men the sisters wed
Of their dead wives, must further range.

226.

"For if a duly wedded pair
No longer should be held the same
In blood, etcetera,—how forbid
Some marriages too bad to name?"

227.

"With parent of a spouse deceased,"
Said Mr. Grace, "you doubtless mean ?
Well, even then, I see no cause
For formal law to intervene.

228.

"Law is an evil in itself:
Laws on their trial ever stand :
Remove strong reason for a law—
Then instantly unloose its band.

229.

"And where a statute keeps its place
Through weight of prejudice alone,
Though half a nation worship it
That statute should be overthrown."

230.

"I don't know that, Sir," answered I ;
"It surely cannot be correct
To legalise revolting deeds
Condemned by nearly every sect."

231.

"Revolting? why that term," said he,
"Unless from something they *revolt* ?
But let the deeds be legalised,
Against what ruler do they jolt ?

232.

"Against a king most powerful
Ill-ordered conduct to prevent—
Public Opinion,—he o'ercrows
The stoutest Acts of Parliament.

233.

"So long as this great potentate
Denounces wrath on all who dare
To favour unions banned by him,
Such unions will indeed be rare."

234.

Said I—"They might perhaps be rare ;
But, were the statute once upset,
I doubt they'd speedily increase,
And bring our land to trouble yet."

235.

Said he—"One good alone outweighs
All ills in such a change comprised :
The children, innocent of wrong,
Would not, as now, be bastardized.

236.

"O Britain! change that law, begot
By priest-pride, nursed by woman-whim ;
Save poor men's homes from bastardy,
Make many a rich man's home less dim."

237.

"Here is the Mission-house," said I.
"Well then," said he, "suppose we drop
Our endless theme ; and take a rest ?"
Says I—"I'm wanted at the shop,

238.

"To meet a certain party there.
I'll stay a bit, Sir, all the same."
We entered. Sullivan was out :
Down sat we, waiting till he came.

PART V.

I.

A while we sat, and silently
All round the mission-room we peered—
Where forms stand ranged for common folk,
And chairs for people softly reared.

2.

At length, with sundry hums and haws
(As usual when one breaks a hush),
Says Mr. Grace—"How bright and gay
Are some whom fate seems bent to crush.

3.

"See James Carmichael—what a life!
Old, poor, good name a little blurred,
Alone, sad memories of two graves,—
Yet is he merry as a bird.

4.

"Whence comes this nature to the poor
In wretchedness to seem content?
Do their racked hearts grow tough through
Or cold, the vital force near spent? [strain?

5.

"Or is it that God gives them power
To make themselves a Paradise—
Illusion decked, yet true for them
As aught beneath the summer skies ?

6.

"'Fool's Paradise' forsooth ! That phrase
Fools to their fellow-fools may tell.
Who makes an Eden must be wise,
The fool is he who makes a Hell.

7.

"Perchance on Poverty's bare hill,
Though noxious thorny growths are found,
Clear paths and prairies yet remain,
Where angels make their daily round ;

8.

"While Wealth's luxuriant reeking vales
Provide for plants such dainty food
That jungles overspread all space,
Save dark foul pits where demons brood.

9.

"And oh ! what tender-heartedness
The vilest poor will often show,
In their great zeal to stint themselves
For sake of those in want or woe.

10.

"Thus infants thrive while mothers pine—
E'en so one sometimes sees a lamb
Rest happy, far from chills of earth,
Couched on its hungry shivering dam."

11.

"That *is* a pretty simile,
Dear Sir," said I; "my poor heart beats,
I almost feel inclined to cry,
In thinking of the baas and bleats

12.

"That used to quaver in the breeze,
As o'er the pleasant sunny down
I took my way—a happy lad
Before I came to this dull town.

13.

"Excuse me, Sir, I have observed,
Although you speak so grave and wise,
A light like glow-worms in the dew
Go wandering often o'er your eyes.

14.

"You surely are a poet, Sir?
Pray do not think of me the worse
For making bold; but—yes or no—
Have you not tried your hand at verse?"

15.

He answered with a kindly smile—
"You're welcome, friend, to take your fling.
My peace of mind is still entire,
I have not published anything."

16.

"Ah! Sir," said I, "I see your drift,
On *published* laying such a stress;
You don't deny your authorship.
You've written poems, Sir?—confess!"

17.

"Jonas," he said, "the charge is true,
I *have* attempted poesy ;—
Yes, scribbled many scores of lines
Now captive under lock and key."

18.

Says I—"Why don't you publish, Sir ?
It is not duty to refuse
To move the bushel off one's light."
Says he—"Those waspy-tailed Reviews !"

19.

"Reviews !" said I, "now really, Sir,
That is a poor excuse to give.
'Fear God and shame the devil,' Sir :
A book that 's good is safe to live."

20.

"Oh yes, that 's very fine," said he ;
"But then one values present ease,
And to be labelled knave and fool
By nameless scribes can scarcely please."

21.

"But are the critics all so bad ?"
Said I,—"*are* all of shoddy stuff ?"
"Olympus ! no," said he ; "but then,
One nameless shameless rogue 's enough

22.

"To do more mischief in an hour,
Than twelve Apostles well could plan ✓
To do of good in twenty years,
To any honourable man.

23.

"Yes ; strange assaults and greetings wait
The Quixote who presumes to give
The world a book—whate'er it be—
Play, poem, novel, narrative!"

24.

"What happens, Sir?" said I. "Oh then,"
Said Mr. Grace, "the usual swing.
The book is good—and yet 'tis bad ;
Says nought—and yet says everything.

25.

"The book is vivid—yet is dull ;
Is fresh yet stale ; is strong yet slack ;
A mine of gold, yet barren dross ;
In short,—'tis white, and yet 'tis black.

26.

"'All's fair in love and war,' except
Some acts that most men reckon sin ;
A wise man takes the praise and blame,
And drinks the mixture with a grin.

27.

"Now comes Gehenna ! There exists
A sort of wretch that lives by prey—
The conscienceless and callous scribe,
The greedy, canting lie-for-pay.

28.

"He crawls and cringes to obtain
Employment from some great Review—
This crafty fiend,—then vampire-like
Lives on its blood, and kills it too.

29.

"This bowel-yearning moralist,
Who serves mankind with all his eye
On Number-one ; this genial saint,
Who loves his God and loves his lie."

30.

"Nay, Sir," said I, "that's too severe.
The man would probably protest
That he is bound to earn his bread,
And really tries to do his best.

31.

"And think how hard a case it is
For any common sinful snob,
To have to write high moral things,
Or fail to get another job !

32.

"And after all, what mighty harm
Suppose the book is wrong abused ?
Religious people should rejoice,
Not make a dust, when false accused."

33.

"Nay, Sir," said he, "just wait a bit.
'Tis wondrous easy to suppose
That torture-boot a pleasant fit
Which only hurts one's neighbour's toes.

34.

"And, as to doing quite his best,—
No doubt the mercenary tries
To earn his pay, and scrape some thanks,—
He does *his* best, and therefore lies.

35.

" But then he does not cast abuse
On the mere book—howe'er unjust
That 's often not unfairly meant,
Tastes will diverge,—' What must be must.'

36.

" He brings the author's self to bar,
And with a hypocritic wail
Pretends much kindness for the man,
But lies up hill, and lies down dale ;

37.

" Makes artful extracts here and there,
Cuts out such words as drive apart
His studied slanders ; then he groans
As if he had a human heart.

38.

" A human heart ? Heaven save the mark,
A heart for Seraphim above !
So sweet, that even noxious beasts
Lie there enshrined and steeped in love.

39.

" A heart ?—a holy Noah's-ark,
A shelter-place and fostering-nook
For all creation,—save alone
The guiltless author of that book.—

40.

" Now Heaven do so and more to such,
In pain and grief and utter shame,
Than their base malice seeks to work
Against some honest man's good fame !"

41.

"Oh! Mr. Grace," said I, "that curse—
However bad the rogue might be—
Is scarce what I can reconcile
With earnest Christianity."

42.

"Yet," answered he, "a precedent
May from your Testament be gleaned ;
Where Michael the archangel said,
'The Lord rebuke thee,' to the fiend.

43.

"Nay, Christ himself, from whom we seek
Example in such ways as these,
Outwent all prophets in hard words,
Denouncing Scribes and Pharisees.

44.

"And if no tongue of wrath should wag
When slanderous knaves pervert the right,
Earth soon would grow a howling Hell,
A wilderness of bane and blight."

45.

"That's true," said I : "but as we wish
To be as fair to foes as friends,
Let's put this case : Suppose one gave
The slanderer means to make amends ;

46.

"Would not he likely strive to show
His heart was still in the right place,
And manfully apologise?"

"Oh, very much!" said Mr. Grace.

47.

"Well, Sir, what would he likely do?"

"Look for a parallel, if you care,"

Said he, "in the young Middy's speech
On 'carrying offal to a bear.'

48.

"If reparation come at all,

It thus arrives,—the general Press

Denounce the spiteful lie-for-pay,

And give the slandered man redress."

49.

"That shows they like fair play," said I;

"So if your poem's nicely writ,

Dear Sir, the Papers will not send

Their savage folk to murder it."

50.

"So much depends," my friend replied,

"Upon the subject; were it made

To smatter classics or high art,

I should not be so much afraid.'

51.

"Nor if it tickled common themes,

In common fashion, on the legs;

Or rambled up and down all time

For nests in which to lay new eggs;

52.

"Or satirised, or dramatised;

Or talked the cant the age demands

To soothe its fevers;—talked in short

What 'every fellow understands'—

53.

"(When once he's learnt your 'argument',
Your verse itself should be confused)—
Why then, I'd publish with small fear
Of being stupidly abused."

54.

'What is your subject, Sir?' said I.
"Religious in a sort of way,"
Said Mr. Grace; "but then you see,
I do not on the surface play,

55.

"And panaceas advertise
To bring the grace yet leave the sin :
I write as I believe, yea know,—
That outside 's nothing, that within

56.

"The fleshly mass that 's called a man
The real man dwells,—to gravitate
To bliss or woe, in every realm,
According to his spirit state."

57.

"Well, Sir," said I, "religious books
Are well reviewed, and sell quite brisk ;
Were you to publish what you say,
I really think you'd run no risk."

58.

"No, no, dear Jonas," answered he,
"A critic's not so blind as that—
Your terrier-critic's always game
To bait the spiritual cat.

59.

"Religion is 'sweet pretty Puss !'
When purring in its proper place,
But if it wander up and down
It gets beyond the reach of grace."

60.

"Where, Sir," said I, "does Pussy stray
In your poetic manuscript ?"
Said he—"In such forbidden haunts
She's certain to be soundly whipt.

61.

"My poem is a rhapsody,
In figure of a fitful dream ;—
Wrongs to the guiltless, sorrow, rage,
Fierce vengeance, form its earlier theme.

62.

"And then it seeks that hidden world
Which lies beyond the corpse's tomb ;
Descends to Hades, to the souls
Of sinners suffering in the gloom ;

63.

"Visits a lower Paradise,
On infant souls to set its gaze ;
Ascends to Heaven's majestic gates
And sees the outmost glories blaze."

64.

Said I—"This might be interesting,
And yet might easily be dull :
A poet quitting earth is apt
To get and give more cry than wool.

65.

"Pray what may be your metre, Sir?
For much depends on that, indeed.
I like to go straight on, not stop
To work conundrums, when I read.

66.

"And some fine poets nowadays
To understand I wholly fail,—
Like dogs that make acquaintanceship
Their words walk round each other's tail."

67.

"Be easy as to that," said he.
"My verses have an English ring,
And march with artless, unrefined,
Dactyllic, Anapestic, swing.—

68.

"Now here I see my critic lunge,
And feel a touch above my waist;
For he who wears a rustic garb
Must suffer for his want of taste."

69.

"Your pardon, Sir," said I; "although
It may be wrong for me to make
The observation, I must say
I think you're quite in a mistake.

70.

"I think that you are jumbling, Sir,
Your pounds and pennies in one purse.
There is a thing called Poetry,
There also is a thing called Verse.

71.

"And as to Verse no doubt you're right ;
One does expect some skilful feat
From men instructed in a trade,
(Thus I can set shop-windows neat) ;

72.

"And in the trade of building verse,
Like building boats or laying bricks,
One likes to see a little taste,—
Some clever strokes and pretty tricks,

73.

"Some foreign touches here and there,
To show of what the workman's made,—
No ignorant apprentice lad,
But thorough master of his trade.

74.

"But, Sir, to *understand* such work
Is more than common folk can do ;
To know how grand it really is,
Why, you must be a master too.

75.

"Now when I talk of Poetry,
I mean the sort of thing that goes
Straight from an earnest glowing heart,
As water from a fountain flows :

76.

"The sort of thing that is not planned
To seek for praise or shrink from blame,
But, like strong breezes, blessed or cursed
Pursues its journey still the same :

77.

"The sort of thing that boasts no skill
In Hebrew-Greek to prate away,
But shouts plain English in your ears
And tells you all it has to say :

78.

"The sort of thing that would not chant
Foul stains that Earth and Heav'n detest,
But does not stop to pick its words
Where honest coarseness suits it best :

79.

"The sort of thing that does not care
For superfine and white kid gloves,
But comes to people, plainly dressed,
And takes their hates, or wins their loves.—

80.

"Now, Sir, if your poetic brains
Have bred a beast at all like that,
No prudent terrier would presume
To bait it as a silly cat !"

81.

He smiled, and answered—"If, indeed,
A beast like that my brains had bred,
I'd straightway go to London town
And show it a pound at a head.

82.

"But speaking plainly,—I suspect
My poem trembles 'twixt two stools ;
Too rough and plain for critics wise,
Too strange and deep for critic fools.

83.

"And mark me ; though I did but joke
On cat and dog, and never meant
An unrestricted general charge,
I truly feel some discontent

84.

✓ "To think how able, honest men
With scorn and ridicule assail
The least attempt to penetrate
The coarse, material, mundane veil,

85.

"Which hides the life that really lives,
Though hid from reckless human eye ;
And, more than this, attack with hate,
Or blight with scoffs, all those who try

86.

"To lift Religion off the tower
Assigned her for a prison-throne,
And lead her here, there, everywhere,
To seize on all things as her own.

87.

"Such notions, now, as these are banned :—
All sowings bring their harvest due,
Inflexibly :—All acts should serve
As praise to God, not one or two."

88.

"Not much that 's startling there," said I ;
"Now is there, Sir ? for first you quote
'Galatians' closely, next you sound
The Christian's universal note."

89.

"The application is the thing,"
Said Mr. Grace ; "if I agree
To generalise, the whole wide world
With one consent will pass me free.

90.

"But if I say—' Dear Mr. Smith,
A first-rate thing in creeds you 've got,
But while you cheat your customers
It does not profit you one jot.

91.

"And further, should you cease to cheat,
And thus your creed's true strength bring in,
You yet must reckon, bit by bit,
For every former act of sin.

92.

"For each foul mixture in your goods,
Each bribe to bend a servant's way,
Each extra charge to rob the rich,—
Your wretched self will have to pay.

93.

"Will pay in justly balanced woe,
Or correspondent loss of bliss,
On earth or in some future life,—
No pardoning grace will alter this!'"

94.

"Oh, Sir," said I, "it wrings my heart
To hear you putting such a case.
Oh never, never, should one set
A limit to the power of grace."

95.

"Far be it from me," he replied,
"To set such bounds: a sinful soul
Can never save itself from sin,
Without God's grace can ne'er be whole.

96.

"But every sinful action leaves
A weakness and a loathsome stain,
Which bar the spirit's upward course,
Till cured and washed through work and pain."

97.

"The Saviour's work and pain," said I,
"Are all I trust in, mine are naught."
"Nay," answered he, "the Saviour's toils
A different recompense have bought,

98.

"From that reputed privilege
Of saving persons full of sin
Who take their ease beside his cross.
Not so; he pours God's spirit in,

99.

"To heal and help repentant souls,
And lead them high beyond all ken.
This his great work's supreme reward,
'He hath received gifts for men.'

100.

"God works not by sheer miracles,
By strange effects without a cause,
Nor Heaven nor Hades, Earth nor Hell,
Is ruled by arbitrary laws.

101.

"To form a fitting human shrine,—
Where nobler spirit-power might bide,
Thence pass to every human soul,—
For this the Saviour lived and died.

102.

"For this he offered all himself—
In pureness, truth, and love, in lone
Long days of thought and nights of prayer—
To God, his father and our own.

103.

"And when o'er death he rose supreme,
His victory to mankind conveyed
Glad tidings that the work was done,
The holy spirit-temple made,

104.

"Where new resplendent heavenly gifts
Lay treasured in exhaustless store,
To bless men's souls, and help them rise
To heights of bliss debarred before.

105.

"Oh! Jonas, I am sick at heart
To see men staring at a grave,
Or worshipping a gory cross,—
While angel hosts bright signals wave,

106.

"To bid them cease their gloomy groan,
To bid them lift their aching eyes
To their great Saviour on the throne
That lightens up all Paradise."

107.

"I fear, I greatly fear," said I,
"That all this bears no other sense
Than this—'The cross, a stumbling-block
To Jews, and to the Greeks offence.'

108.

"And verily *my* eyes don't ache,
Nor do *I* groan, Christ's grave to see ;
I like to 'hide myself' within
The bleeding 'rock' that's 'cleft for me' ;

109.

"To cast my 'red as scarlet' sins,
And all my 'filthy rags' of good,
Upon that rock, and wash my soul
In a rich bath of sacred blood ;

110.

"To put my fingers in the wounds
Deep cut by scourge and spear and nail—"
Said Mr. Grace, "You conjure up
A very dreadful spectacle."

111.

"May-be," I answered ; "yet I say
No more than many a Scripture saith."
"Good," he replied : "my bath shall be
In stream of Life, not blood of Death.

112.

"How strange, when people have the choice
'Twixt savage gloom and tender light,
To find them doating on the dark,
As if what's horrid *must* be right.

113.

"Less strange tho', when one scans the paths
Trode by the youthful Christian creed,
Through lands of false and abject slaves,
And lords compact of blood, lust, greed.

114.

"Yet what a beauteous babe it was,
Ere brutes and pedants learned to mar
Its loveliness, to quench the sheen
Of Bethlehem's softly beaming star!

115.

"Yea, deem that holy tale but myth,
Reject the angel's song with scorn,
Reject three books called Gospels,—then
Complacent hug the dogmas born

116.

"From Alexandria's teeming womb,
With fierce old Israel for their sire;
Reject simplicity, peace, love,
Accept complexity, blood, fire.

117.

"O first believers! o'er your tombs
Christ as Pandæan shepherd smiles;
Or, hymning to an Orphic lyre,
All earth with melody beguiles;

118.

"Or soars to the celestial spheres,
Apollo-like, in sun arrayed,
A glorious, free, triumphant king:—
Ye first believers! not afraid

119.

"To be thus glad? What, knew ye not
That o'er your tombs ye ought to place
A man expiring on a cross
With dread and anguish in his face?"

120.

Said I, "I cannot follow you
Into these questions, Sir, at all.
My faith is grounded on the clear
Explicit teaching of St. Paul."

121.

Said he, "My custom less has been,
Whatever oracle might nod,
To find my Saviour through St. Paul,
Than seek a Saviour through my God."

122.

"What mean you, Sir?" said I. "Perhaps",
Said he, "you'll think I too much dare;
A revelation I expect,
Not thro' old books, but through fresh prayer."

123.

"A revelation, Sir!" said I,—
"Of that we, sure, have got our fill.
As Paley says, a God of love
Of course would let us know his will."

124.

"True," answered he; "and just because
Book-revelation is obscure,
I doubt its coming straight from God,—
So seek one more distinct and pure."

125.

"Say, hath not Jesus left his life
To form for all mankind a guide?
And yet, how bare that life might seem
Of aught that now could be applied

126.

"To pattern forth a follower's way,
In days so new, in times so late!
Nay further, if that blessed life
With calm cold eyes we contemplate,

127.

"How bare of struggle, grief, and pain,
(The God-idea set aside)
His quick-spiced life and death, compared
With the long lives of saints who died

128.

"A thousand deaths as years rolled by,
And ended with a martyrdom
More rich in agony than his
Whose victory won the heavenly home.

129.

"Yea, let us look more deep than view
Mere outward incidents of life:
Christ overpasses common saints,
Not in his body's pangs and strife,

130.

"But in his inner perfectness,
The fruit of long, lone prayer to God.
God's spirit filled that holy heart,
Thence healing for all nations flowed.

131.

"Let those who fain would follow Christ
And in Christ's revelation share,
Take Christ's own way—leave books and men,
And seek for God in lonely prayer."

132.

"That has a better sound," said I,
"Than I suspect it quite deserves."
"At least," said he, "it saves a man
From superstitions of the nerves."

133.

"For the afflatus thus derived
Flows straight from Heaven, and does not pass
Through men, as when Revivalists
Bewitch a fervent, foolish mass."

134.

"Whence comes their fervour, Sir?" said I.
Said he—"From sympathetic laws;
As dogs will howl when others howl,
Though knowing nothing of the cause."

135.

"Far, far remove that hymning herd
Who cringe and pule and cant and rave!
It greatly wrongs the Father-God
To make oneself, his son, a slave."

136.

"And far remove those saints who trust
In music, scents, and vestments smart,
And take the tingling of the nerves
For the deep motion of the heart."

137.

"The motion of the heart! Why he
Who crams his stomach at a feast
And smacks his lips o'er jovial wine,
Is in as pious frame,—at least

138.

"So far as serves the pleasant glow
Of sensuous feeling satisfied.—
Lord, let thy spirit speak to mine,
Yea, let it in my heart abide!"

139.

"A holy wish," said I, "dear Sir,
But still I think your doctrines wrong;
Though good might come from them at first,
The bad in them would prove so strong

140.

"That good would take to flight." Said he,
"Not quite untaxed the bird would fly,
And the tail-feathers of a truth
Outweigh a whole fat larded lie.

141.

"And to my mind, if not to yours,
The doctrines fashioned out by priests
Are not celestial birds of song,
But far more like to earthly beasts."

142.

Says I—"Priests never made the creed
Of Protestants!" Says he—"Be cool,
The negro has not changed his skin,
But merely straightened out his wool."

143.

Says I—"The best men think like me!"
Says he—"That matters not a grain.
The virtues which exalt the heart
Not always elevate the brain."

144.

"Well, Sir," I said, "it's little use
To argue further. All my creed
Is Jesu's cross,—for there I find
A Saviour 'suited to my need'."

145.

"Jonas", said he, "just stick to that,
And put the fiends to easy rout;
In dangerous paths, a blind belief
Goes safer than a blinking doubt."

146.

"You mock me, Sir," said I; "just now
You held to scorn that very view."
"Yes," answered he; "the view itself,
For men in general—not for *you*."

147.

"Things change in look, as from the point
Subjective or objective spied;
And Truth, the changeless, is approached
By paths that come from many a side."

148.

"The Indian's oft-incarnate god
May prove for *him* a god indeed;
The Spaniard's Mary, Queen of Heaven,
May be the saviour for *his* need."

149.

"Things can't be false and yet be true,"
Said I. "I think they can," said he:
"And, likewise, true and yet quite false.
Come, Jonas, let us both agree

150.

"To serve the Lord with might and main,
With all our heart, and soul, and strength.
Thus striving ever, year by year,
'Tis certain we shall meet at length

151.

"In better worlds than this poor globe;
And then, with lights of heavenly hue
Illuming our glad souls, shall learn
Which views are false, and which are true."

152.

"God grant it, Sir!" said I. "Some folk
Would tell me that I must not think
To meet in Heaven a man who doubts
'Imputed Merit'; but I shrink

153.

"From such opinions. Yes, dear Sir,
No words of mine have strength to tell
What anguish I should feel in Heaven,
If you, dear Sir, were sent to Hell."

154.

"God bless thee, Jonas," said my friend;
"I'd gladly trust my soul to thee:—
And art thou nobler than the Lord,
The Lord of all Eternity!

155.

"Oh! were it now our happy lot
To tread celestial fields.—Alas,
Time fools us sadly here below—
How years, how days,—how minutes—pass!

156.

"Behold a proof"—With outstretched arm
He held his watch for me to scan.
He rose. "Oh stay!" said I, "do wait
To bid good-bye to Sullivan."

157.

He shook his head, but settled down.
Said I—"Well, that is good of you.
My dear, dear Sir, when you are gone
Whatever will poor Jonas do!"

158.

Said he—"Ah! Jonas, such regard
For both of us by Heaven is blessed.
These leave-takings! These aches of heart!
These thoughts that cannot be expressed!

159.

"How oft your cheerful lovingness
Has filled my lone sad soul with mirth!
And now we part :—too well I know
We ne'er shall meet again on earth.

160.

"Oh! that all friends would learn to bind
Soul to sweet soul in such embrace,
By mystic spirit-power entwined,
That change of state or change of place,

161.

"Through the long, long eternity
That broods o'er boundless land on land,
Should never bear that love away
Nor sever sacred friendship's band."

162.

"Dearest and best of friends!" I said,
And down my cheeks the tear-drops ran:—
When hark! a rattling at the door,
And in came Mr. Sullivan.

163.

His face was pale, his lips were set,
His eyes stared dim, he seemed engrossed
By some deep horror in his mind,—
He looked as if he'd seen a ghost.

164.

He walked a step or two, then stopped,
Then walked, and then again stood still.
"Why Mr. Sullivan," said I,
"What is it ails you, are you ill?"

165.

"*Ill* is it, Jonas, did you say?
Me ill?" he whispered with a groan.
"Oh Sir, the sight I've seen this day
Would turn a statue's heart to stone!"

166.

I felt quite frightened. Mr. Grace
Went up and gently took his arm,
And said—" 'Twould be no common sight
That shook your courage. If no harm,

167.

"I fain would ask what sight it was
That could your spirit thus appal."
Said Sullivan—"I'll tell you, Sir.
I'll tell it all—yes, tell it all."

168.

"Well, sit you down," said Mr. Grace,
And pushed towards Sullivan a chair;
The latter soon grew more composed,—
He passed his fingers through his hair,

169.

Then cleared his throat, and thus began:—
"I'd been to visit Biddy Dowd;
And, passing by Mackenzie's place,
I got among a drunken crowd.

170.

"And in the middle of them sat
A fellow tipsy as a king,
A great fat beast; he rolled about,
And vomited; and tried to sing

171.

"'A man's a man for a' that'—sure
You know the words?—it's one by Burns.
The beast he couldn't sing a note,
But rolls about and roars by turns.

172.

"'Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,'—
He bellowed out,—and puked and spat,—
'The rank is but a guinea-stamp,
A man's a man for a'—a' that—

173.

“‘For a’—a’ that, for a’—a’ that’—
‘You filthy drunken beast!’ said I,
‘If lords were like your mates and you,
High time to bid this land goodbye.’

174.

“‘That’s Gospel true,’ a woman said;
‘Were gentlefolk such brutes, I think
There soon would be no room to grow
The crops to make the people’s drink.’

175.

“She had an English-speaking tongue—
Said she, ‘He fuddles muddles on,
From Saturday to Saturday,
At least till all his money’s gone;

176.

“‘But though he’s savage quarrelsome,
I’ve seldom seen him helpless queer;
He’s shy of that, the brute,—he loves
His precious carcase far too dear!’

177.

“‘What is his business, Ma’am?’ said I.
‘Dear me!’ she said, ‘I’ve quite forgot.
He earns two sovereigns, near, a week,
And drinks it all away—the sot!’

178.

“Here I inquired, if this vile man
Had got a wife and children? Yes,
He had:—poor things! she was afraid
They were in very great distress.

179.

"She seemed so civilly disposed,
I asked her,—Would she kindly spare
The time to show me where they lodged?
She said, at once, she'd take me there.

180.

"We walked a piece, and then we turned
Into a little narrow street—
I'd never gone along that way,
The place was scarcely in my beat.

181.

"'Well, here 's Hell Tammy's house,' said she,
And stopped, and pointed to a door;
'Go up the stairs, then forward straight,
No others lodge upon that floor.'

182.

"'Why not?' said I. 'If you could see
Hell Tammy when he shakes his knife,
You would not ask; nor if you heard
His language when he beats his wife.'

183.

"So saying, off the woman went;
She hardly stopped to say goodbye,
She seemed so frightened at that house.
Then up the stairs alone went I.

184.

"At first I thought she'd told me false,
The passage was so deathly still.
I passed by several empty rooms,
Where vermin rambled at their will.

185.

"And then at length I reached a door
Close shut, and locked. No answer came
To all my knocks. I felt and knew
That wrong lurked there, but foolish shame

186.

'To burst the door still held me. Then
Again I listened. Not a sound.
I rushed against the door, I strove
With kicks and blows. At last I found

187.

"A rusty bar, with which I thrust
So hard and well I made it pass
Below the lock, then levered strong.
In burst the door—alas! alas!

188.

"The sight I saw!—against the wall
A row of naked children pressed,
And naked in the midst of them
Their mother seated on a chest.

189.

"Their eyes were fixed, their jaws were slack,
Their bony bodies greenish dun,—
They looked like withering skeletons,
Or reptiles drying in the sun.

190.

"A baby lay upon the floor,
Not naked, but it seemed quite dead:
The others stared so stonily
I thought I soon should lose my head

191.

"They sat and stared so stonily,
Like mummies in a heathen tomb.
My tongue refused to speak a word :
I went to them across the room :

192.

"I crept quite softly, for I feared
Lest I should wake them,—and transgress,
And ghosts lay hold on me, because
I'd dared to break that silentness.

193.

"I took the mother by the hand,
And listened if her pulses beat :
Strength passed from me, her eyes slow moved
And sought the baby at her feet.

194.

"'Alas!' I said, 'I am afraid
You're very ill?' she raised her face,
And whispered with a feeble gasp—
'Starved'—"O my God!" cried Mr. Grace,

195.

And rose, and raised his hands to Heaven :
Then pressed them both against his heart ;
'Then wrung them hard, and crouched like one
Who feels the scourge's fiery smart,

196.

And waits next blow. And then he prayed,
All lonesome in his agony—
"O Lord, O Father, O great Lord,
Oh save my soul from doubt of thee !

197.

"Have not I trusted thee, O Lord?
Have not I loved thee? Ah, wherefore
Dost blight with riddles! Have I loved ✓
A shade, a phantasm?—No more

198.

"My yearning soul shall beat itself
Against the accursèd prison walls—
Thou art too mighty, heartless Fate:
See, at thy feet thy captive falls.

199.

"Crush me, oh crush me into nought,
And end for ever all these woes;
Obliterate my utter life,
Crush all that feels, that sees, that knows!—

200.

"And yet, how sweet a thing it was
To deem that soft around me glowed
An infinite exhaustless love;
To fancy that my being flowed

201.

"From Him, love's fountain,—and was set
To reach erelong its heavenly goal:—
Nay Lord! reveal thyself again,
Allay this fever of the soul!

202.

"Since when, in youth's ill-ordered days,
Reflection first began to blend
With fiery earthly impulses,
Lord, I have known thee for a friend.

203.

"The friend, the father-friend, whose eye
Watched all my steps with tireless care,—
Made e'en my sins a benefit,
For pain and sorrow taught me prayer.

204.

"And shall I learn to doubt thee now,
Because of aught that seems apart
From justice in this groaning world?—
I, who have rested on thy heart!

205.

"Thus felt, as one so poor may feel,
The tidal throb of love's vast sea—
I would not do my foe such wrong,
And shall I do it, Lord, to thee?

206.

"Ah no! whate'er of wretchedness
Befalls thy gentle guiltless ones,
Whate'er of life's coarse outer joy
Regales thine evil tyrant sons,

207.

"Still shall my glad unwavering trust,
My heart's love, at thy feet be laid;
My spirit hymn the miracles
To its deep consciousness displayed,

208.

"Through all its earthly wandering
In exile from the sacred shore,—
Whence yet it faintly hears high strains
Of melody, and longs once more

209.

"For entrance to the heavenly home
It left, long weary years ago,
To make apprentice-pilgrimage,
Learn sin,—and sin's reflexion, woe.—

210.

"Fool that I am! the children starve,
While I, forsooth, must prate and pray.
Come, Sullivan, let's up and off
To succour them—away, away!"

211.

"Now rest you, Sir," said Sullivan,
"There's little risk of loss of life;
I've sent some neighbours to the house,
And now I come to fetch my wife—

212.

"Far better there than you or me—
You see, Sir, it's a woman's case.
I'll write"—"As you regard your soul
Forget not that!" said Mr. Grace.

213.

"Would that the work might brook delay
Which calls me hence to-morrow morn—
Another fibre of my heart
Cut,—nay, asunder rudely torn.

214.

"Ah! Jonas, yon bright evening star,
Shines sad for me; it bids me leave
Companionship that cheers me well:—
Yet wherefore should I strongly grieve?

215.

"For though perchance your mortal eyes
May ne'er again behold my face,
A few short years will carry me
To the far spirit-dwellingplace—

216.

"So far yet near ;—and thence I'll come
To visit you when calm and lone,
And, through deep impulses, my soul
Shall hold communion with your own ;

217.

"Cheer you in conflict, and in toil
Urge and invigorate your will,
Watch your soul's spirit-visitants,
Guide you to good and warn from ill.

218.

"And when from the sear earthly garb
Your soul and spirit fain would glide,
Then will I usher you to day
And chant glad welcomes at your side.

219.

"Yes, O my friends ! forbear to dread
That aught of variance in belief
Will sunder those whom God hath led
To fellowships of joy and grief ;

220.

"Will sunder loving soul from soul :
Through earnest longing to unite,
Each shall cast error's weights away
And struggle towards the other's light.

221.

"And, O my friends, when'er it hap
That thoughts of me shall come and go
Across your memories, think of me
As one who much desired to know

222.

"The utter truth ; who counted that
The pearl of all-transcendent sheen ;
Who, seeking truth yet finding not,
Still kept his faith in things unseen ;

223.

"Still yearned to God in endless prayer,—
Still cried for light, for light, for light,
And knew that light would reach his eyes,
Unless all God himself were night.

224.

"Thus, friends, I take my daily way,
Not jubilant, nor yet afraid.
I'll work my works and pray my prayers,
And, looking Heaven-ward undismayed,

225.

"Will humbly, gladly, render up—
This mortal pilgrimage out-trod—
My body to the Mother Earth,
My spirit to the Father God."

226.

He ended. Then he gazed at us
With eyes more sad than words can tell.
He wrung my hand : "Farewell", he sighed ;
"God bless you, friends ; farewell, farewell."

T. RICHARDS, PRINTER, 37, GREAT QUEEN STREET, W.C.





the 1990s, the number of people with a mental health problem has increased by 50% (Mental Health Foundation, 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of people with mental health problems, and a number of initiatives have been developed to support this. The Mental Health Act (1983) provides a legal framework for the care of people with mental health problems. The Mental Health Act (1983) also provides a legal framework for the care of people with mental health problems. The Mental Health Act (1983) also provides a legal framework for the care of people with mental health problems.

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